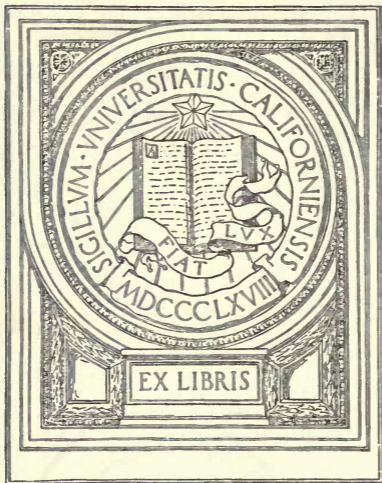


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A

LETTER

TO

A Member of the House of Commons,

UPON THE

MEETING OF PARLIAMENT,

BY

THE AUTHOR OF THE LETTERS TO MR. FOX,

UPON THE DANGEROUS AND INFLAMMATORY TENDENCY OF HIS
CONDUCT IN PARLIAMENT,

AND

UPON THE PRINCIPLES, DUTIES, AND COMPOSITION OF MINORITIES.

Bentley, Richard

*Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici,
Pleraque differat et præsens in tempus omittat.* HOR.

LONDON:

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M DCC XCIV.

ERRATA.

- Page 4, Line 2, for contraction, *read* contradiction.
— 22, — 24, — the unjustest, *read* their justest.
— 23, — *note*, — in, *read* for.
— 39, — 29, — dele interest.
— 42, — 23, — alteration, *read* alternation.
— 44, — 23, — it, *read* he.
— 53, — 15, — whole, *read* noble.
— 64, — 5, — are, *read* were.
— 69, — 16, — more, *read* less.

JN
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1794
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A LETTER

TO

A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

UPON THE

MEETING OF PARLIAMENT,

Ec. Ec. Ec.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN you engaged me so anxiously to put into writing the heads of those conversations which I had the pleasure to hold with you, during your stay at ———, I easily judged that you were desirous of learning, whether the impression they made upon you would be common to other persons, who could not be biased or misled by that kind and habitual partiality you bear me; when I promised, therefore, to comply with your wishes, it was with the secret intention of submitting my opinions, not only to such of your private friends as you might think proper to consult upon them, but to the Public, which is not, and which has no cause to be, inclined to think too favourably, in general, of political persons and of political pretensions.

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In fact, Sir, it is but a common justice to you, that the sentiments which, I confess, I have uniformly endeavoured to instil into your mind, and the arguments by which I have enforced them, should be submitted to an unprejudiced and a disinterested tribunal; and it is at least a great satisfaction to myself to be able to appeal for its decision, and to submit to its judgment, whether I have warped your opinions by your affections, and made our friendship an instrument, instead of a motive, for persuading you. You know I am not of the opinion of Tully, that to perfect friendship it is necessary to hold the same political opinions; and, certainly, I think it much less so at London than it might have been at Rome (to draw the comparison between his times and our own) because there was then no question of dividing, and balancing, and tempering the powers and attributes of Government; and there could exist no parties, but this of the republic, and that of the usurpers; it was not party, but civil war; it was not opposition, but enmity and defiance: To range upon the same side, therefore, in disputes like these, was undoubtedly necessary to the enjoyment, whether it was so or not to the existence of friendship. But in our complex and mitigated government, the shades of opinion that form divisions and parties are so faint, and frequently so metaphysical, that they are not perceived in the commerce of private life, and can neither obscure nor distinguish those fastidious and affected sects, into
which

which interest and vanity, rather than either discord or principle, have split and distributed society,

Whether or not, however, this opinion of Cícero be just, which I doubt; and be applicable, which I deny: I speak from my own feelings, which are not unknown to you, when I say that, his “*idem sentire de republicâ,*” is an apothegm, which has had more success in the world than it ought to have had, though not more than it might have been easy to foresee it would obtain, since it is addressed more to the passions and the spleen, than to the virtue or the reason of mankind; and has too often furnished an ingenious, and at last a ready and a vulgar excuse for the violation of private ties, obligation, and gratitude, under that specious, but false pretext of public principle.

Friendship appears to me to be founded entirely upon moral relations; and no difference in political, or even in religious opinions, could, I think, have the power to impair it, unless it were already shaken or decayed in its real foundations. How narrow must be the soul of him who can forgive no difference?—How base the spirit that can support no contradiction?—Neither can I admit, excepting as a form of civility, the sorrow it is usual to express, when we differ in opinion from any one. “*Sine verborum contumeliâ,*” says Tully to one of his friends, “*â te dissentire possum, sine animi summo dolore non possum.*”

The only effect I can perceive in my own mind, however, to result from the contraction of my friends is, to make me more doubtful and diffident of my own convictions; it obliges me to analyze my argument, to consider, and enquire, and combine anew my reasons, inferences, and deductions. But all this I can do, I confess, without experiencing the minutest sensation of sorrow; or even, what I suspect to be a more common feeling, of humiliation. For upon what side of a controversy is it possible to range ourselves, where we shall not be opposed by an immense authority of opinion? Contradiction therefore, with the permission of Cicero, ought to make us uncertain, but not unhappy; to leave us doubtful, but neither mortified nor angry. The opposition of sentiment in those I most love and esteem, is but an inducement with me to examine the subject of our discussion with increased accuracy and attention: At the same time, I acknowledge the strong impulse I feel to convince those whom I love and esteem of particular truths, which ought to influence their happiness or their actions: and that I feel every motive to persuade them, which friendship, or perhaps vanity, can suggest to me. Still, if I fail, I am contented with the effort I have made, and am satisfied that a difference of ideas is not an alienation of our hearts. Had I lived at the beginning of the last century, when Hampden and Falkland divided the admiration of the age, and had I enjoyed the honourable fortune to be the friend of either, I am sure

I had

I had not ceased to be so for the part that either acted upon the theatre of the civil war. Who that feels but a spark of virtue in his breast, would have quarrelled with More for his religion, with Sidney or Blake for their politics? Philosophy and party, believe me, can divide none but little minds. I think sometimes, however, that more has been attached to the opinion I am speaking of, than can fairly be inferred from it, at least if the author of it meant all that is imputed, he has worded it with a more than diplomatic chicanery: and if he had been categorized upon his proposition, he would probably have been driven to defend himself by a piece of casuistry analogous to what we have heard applauded in a modern Senate, and to have told his opponent, that he meant it as a minister, but not as a man. With this *distinguo*, I believe we must suffer the axiom to pass; to which, in effect, no man is so indifferent as myself; for whether it be owing to the particular bias of my own mind, so totally averse to all party and to all partizans, or to the conviction I entertain, the result of the little knowledge I have of history, and of the few observations I have made upon mankind, I think party incompatible with all friendship, all truth, all sincerity, all honour whatsoever.

In the title-page, you have found me confessing myself the author of two indolent pamphlets, which have occasioned some discourse in the world, and more than once been the subject of discussion be-

tween ourselves. The same motives which decided me to with-hold my name from those papers, namely, the hurry and inaccuracy with which they were written, will induce me more forcibly to suppress it upon the present occasion; and I have still stronger reasons, considering the actual circumstances of the times, to keep my secret; for I do not pretend, nor flatter myself, "*principibus placuisse viris.*"—I write for you only; though I am content to be read by those who, I think, it is but just should determine between us; and it is rather a whimsical, but a real and unaffected coincidence, which makes me acknowledge myself to you, and conceal myself from all the world besides; though I know not whether it be merely my habitual and incorrigible indolence, or whether I may flatter myself that it is a rooted, and constant contempt of that bastard child of Fame, so properly called Popularity—Popularity, which mocks or deceives the present age, and sets posterity at defiance. But, besides the necessity my confession spares me, of recapitulating the arguments contained in those insignificant pages, I have another inducement to make it, in the pleasure I feel in bringing back to your recollection the conversations we have held together respecting them, by which you will be able to call to mind, how very little confident I have ever been in the truth or exactness, or anxious in the defence of my own judgment, when placed in opposition to yours, or even to that of persons for whom I could not feel all the same prepossession and deference.

deference. I shall indulge my vanity at the same time, in making some of those points known to the Public, in which the concurrence of your sentiments has stamped a value upon my own!

A principal point of agreement, as I remember, was the necessity I had argued and enforced, of forming a national party upon a national principle, if we expected either to have any reform in the filth and corruption of our Government, or any security for what is left of independence and liberty; at least if we would avoid obtaining these ends by means fatal to the very being of Parliaments, and to the Constitution itself, by remedies which I have described to be more dangerous, more destructive, than any disease.

Still you considered the unknown author of that opinion as sanguine, and visionary in the extreme, and thought it impossible that his standard could be reared in "*face Romuli*," in the dregs and lees, the sink and kennel of Alfred; or that there could be found a sufficient number of men, pure and uncontaminated enough to desire to repair it. Of the person too, who was openly invited to preside over such a party, you seemed to imagine it particularly unreasonable to form any favourable expectations; and you asserted, that his very appearance in the midst of it would prevent it from being joined by such as would look, no doubt, for a less suspicious and a less violent leader.

Another observation of yours I take the liberty of reciting, because I am convinced of its justice and its force, and have determined to act in conformity with it. The last of these pamphlets, after pressing the Gentleman to whom they are addressed to reform his party, or rather to form a new one, upon the principles of which I have been speaking, seems to promise to point out the means, by which a reform might be accelerated, and the measures which it would be expedient to pursue in order to obtain it, according to the existing plan and known history of our constitution. Here you said, “ There is great
 “ danger of your politician turning projector, and
 “ still greater of his causing his project to miscarry,
 “ by a premature developement and disclosure of
 “ the whole of it. It will be rejected by many, be-
 “ cause it *is reform*; by many, because it is *not re-*
 “ *volution*; and he ought to foresee, that it will
 “ please none *perfectly*, but himself, and a few of his
 “ partizans.”—Whatever, my dear Sir, may be my conviction, with regard to the whole of this opinion of yours, it is perfect with regard to the propriety of with-holding any plan, or project, if that fanciful term become it more, till there shall appear a better disposition to be honest upon one side, and to be temperate upon the other; till there shall arise a sense of the shame and dishonour of with-holding every thing from the people in those who owe every thing to the people; and in those whose policy it is to demand every thing for the people, a sense of the peril

and the mischief of obtaining too much, or of obtaining any thing by means of the people; till those who have power shall perceive the danger of denying every thing; and those who have popularity, the wickedness of grasping and seizing every thing; in short, till there shall arise a calmer and a wiser spirit, a spirit of justice on the one hand, and of moderation on the other, a desire to grant what will otherwise be exacted, and a disposition to accept in peace and tranquillity, what will else be the fruit of much unhappiness and of many crimes.

I find myself under a necessity, from the confession I have made to you, to vindicate myself in another point, which would, indeed, have been superfluous with regard to yourself, but which becomes necessary from respect to the Public, who will naturally lay the sins of the letter writer to Mr. Fox upon the author of these pages, and regard them with the same suspicion which has unfortunately fallen upon the former. Those gentlemen who have been pleased to criticise those humble performances, in a manner infinitely more favourable than, I doubt, they have any pretensions to deserve, have also been pleased to insinuate a censure, which I know it was impossible they could have deserved. I have the vanity to think, Sir, that not only yourself, but the whole number of those who are acquainted with their author, if he had avowed himself, would have arisen in refutation of

of

of that oblique, but unjust accusation; and that those who made it, if they could have guessed or suspected to whom they applied it, would have felt, that no compliment, no flattery to the language and composition of his pamphlets, could balance the imputation they have conveyed against the principle and the purity of the motive with which they were written.

It has been alledged, that there is an evident variance between the first letter and the second; that the first, *pour trancher le mot*, is a ministerial pamphlet; and that the second evidently betrays a mistrust, or a dislike of the Administration. I shall not trespass very long upon your patience in preferring my defence; but to this charge it is necessary that I should add the inuendo of my accusers; they say, that as no *Public Event* has happened between the publication of these two letters, which could be the cause of such a change in opinion, they are afraid the virtue of the writer is not of the purest kind.

Now, my dear Sir, I assert, in direct contradiction to these gentlemen, that the first letter was not a ministerial pamphlet; and that if it had been, a public event had taken place before the writing of the second, which could have been, and which ought to have been the cause of what they call an evident variation; and the dates of these two letters are themselves

themselves the proof it. The first, written in January, was composed under the sense of the immediate dangers of the country ; and I hope I shall not be suspected of too much vanity, if I venture to place it by the *State Ballad* of Mr. Boswell, and call it a national pamphlet : in fact, it was one, if ever there was one written or published in any country under heaven. Threatened with insurrection and revolution at home, with the invasion of our allies, and with war, both foreign and domestic, the weak and paralytic hand of Government had need of every succour, every prop, every support. The people stood aghast and terrified, uncertain between the known and unknown dangers that threatened it. It was necessary to strengthen the Administration, no matter how, or of whom it were composed ; it was necessary to induce the nation, distracted and perplexed with the impudence and sophistry of our parties, to confront its enemies, and to undertake the war with resolution and with unanimity. In this spirit was the first letter composed ; with what success, it is not for me to determine. But were these gentlemen at liberty to infer, that the author was a partizan of Ministers, because he pressed the declaration of the war, which has since been carried into effect ; or that he was in concert with Government, because he resented the base and malignant artifices of France, and dreaded the destruction of our admirable Constitution at home ? Were they at liberty to suppose, that he approved of *all* their measures, because he endeavoured

to encourage and confirm them in *one*, which the honour, the interest, and the safety of the country demanded at their hands? Because he exposed the treachery of the *concealed* and the *public* enemy, and endeavoured to withhold the most formidable of their adversaries from lending hope or authority to the anarchy which threatened our establishments?—It is doubtless become necessary for me to protest against conclusions and inferences like these;—for me, who see no safety for Europe but in the success of our arms; nor for our own liberty and Constitution, but in the dismissal, and punishment of Ministers, as soon as we shall have less to dread from their successors than from themselves.....I know these sentiments will please no party. Those who try to make a common cause between the war and corruption, will not think themselves obliged to him who defends the war, but makes war against corruption; nor be inclined to pardon the enemy of the Court, in favour of the defender of the Constitution. The cause of Europe, and the principles of civil society, will not weigh with them against the cobwebs of the drawing-room; believe me, the fears they entertain for their country are not quite equal to their fears for their salaries.—If these persons will acknowledge no obligation for the little support he might have lent to the Minister, still less will the Opposition, or the Clubbists, be inclined to regard, with any partiality or favour, a writer, whose virtue, let it be of *what kind it will*, is certainly not of *their kind*, but detests their

their crimes and violence, and deprecates their madness and despair, with so much appearance, at least, of horror and antipathy, that it has been mistaken for friendship or complicity with the Court! Yet, Sir, I take my conscience to witness, that, though I have had no party to serve, no interest to promote, no ambition to flatter, I have not written in an idle, or an unconnected cause;—I have written to the wise and moderate of every description; and I have called on those who yet are sullied by no crime nor baseness, who are allied to no prostituted cause, and entangled with no dark and intricate engagements, who have no desire, no interest, but the welfare and salvation of their country, who are neither corruption's slaves, nor ambition's dupes; I have called on these, and I think I have not called in vain; but I will call again and again, if I have health and life, till my voice is heard, and till the spirit of the country is awake, till public contempt and resentment brand the profligate factions that rend the State, and prey upon the commonweal; till not my voice, but the voice of the people shall be heard, and it be unsafe to be wicked; and dangerous, as well as base, to be publicly unprincipled and corrupt. Behold then the party to which your friend is attached, to which he will for ever belong; and do not think that it is a creature of his fancy, a chimera of his brain; believe me, it exists. The statue is yet indeed within the block, but as it is formed it lives; the Promethean torch has been held to it in the brute rock;

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the chissel gives it shape and animation at the same stroke ; it assists itself the plastic hand that seems to create it, and throws off with the first effort and curiosity of existence the cumbrous crust that conceals its symmetry and proportion. In the mean time

Que puis-je faire de mieux que d'aider de toutes mes forces à répandre cette vérité *qui prépare les voies* ? On commence par la mal recevoir, peu-à-peu les esprits s'y accoutument, l'opinion publique se forme, & enfin l'on apperçoit à l'*execution*, des principes, qu'on avait d'abord traités de folles chimeres—dans presque tous les ordres des préjugés, si des ecrivains n'avoient consenti à passer pour des fous, le monde en seroit aujourd'hui moins sage.

But however visionary or chimerical I may appear to be in entertaining these ideas, the very pamphlet in question is a proof that I cannot hesitate to lend my little aid and assistance as often as the country is in danger—Her peril will always animate my patriotism ; indifferent to men, and almost to measures, when her safety or her honour are exposed, I think I shall never be ashamed nor afraid to appear amongst the foremost of her defenders, let them belong to what party they will, or be described by what name they think proper.

And now let me ask, not only of you, my dear Sir, but of the enlightened and honest of every party in the kingdom, whether the month of January, 1793, when Dumourier had already turned his face towards Holland, when the decrees of the National Convention had already taken rebellion under the protection of the victorious armies of France; when London was deformed and horrible with foreign faces; and the murderers of Paris and Avignon stalked fearless through our streets; when anarchy and revolution refounded from every ale-house bench; when rancour and discontent scowled from the brows of industry; when the whole kingdom heaved with convulsive throes, and the great fabric of our State trembled upon its basis; I say, let me ask, if that had been a time to enquire, whether the Minister had arrived by wholesome means at the seat of Government, or had presided there with wisdom or justice? Whether it were honest to have triumphed over and dishonoured Parliaments, to have broken his word with the people, to have doubled the corrupt and destructive influence of the Crown, to have played, and trimmed, and speculated with public justice, and polluted with the artifice and fraud of a politician, the solemn, sacred act of a national impeachment *? Whether it had been a time to discuss
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* While the impeachment is pending (if it lasts for another seven years) I shall give no opinion that can affect the accused. As it concerns the nation and the House of Commons in particular

the justice of the plunder of India, the wisdom of being cheated by Spain, or the glory of being brow-beaten by Russia?

I know

lar, it is interesting and necessary to consider it; and I think there is no time to be lost; supposing too that any arguments of mine could have weight with the Public, it is incumbent upon me not to withhold them. I shall certainly not say at present whether I think Mr. Hastings is innocent or guilty. It is sufficient for me that he is either one or the other, and that Mr. Pitt, as well as myself, must believe him to be either the one or the other. Now, if he thought Mr. Hastings guilty, under the articles preferred against him, and that it was incumbent upon the honour and justice of the House of Commons, to present them at the bar of the House of Lords, it was his duty to have carried them up with all the dignity, and all the authority and all the unanimity of the House; and instead of confiding the impeachment to the conduct of the Opposition, a weak party, whom he lost no opportunity to mortify and discredit, to have assumed a principal character himself, and to have named others amongst the King's servants to sustain the parts it became them to act upon this important stage; it was his duty to have established the facts, to have proved the guilt, to have pressed the conviction, and to have demanded the punishment. There prevails a shrewd suspicion in the country, that if amongst the Managers of this prosecution there had appeared either Ministers or Crown-Lawyers, or any of the friends of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the issue, whatever it might have been, would have been decided some few years past, and all those complaints against the indolence, neglect, and fastidiousness of the House of Peers, had either never been born, or had been stifled as soon as they began to cry out. But if Mr. Hastings had been, in the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a faithful and meritorious servant of the Public, I think it was his duty to have defended him against the spleen, malevolence, and envy of those who were not only the enemies of Mr. Hastings, but his own; and I think it was
fo

I know what you will answer, and what will be answered by all to whom I have appealed; but surely those who are disposed to judge, or to speak so favourably of me, where I have at best but very questionable and imperfect pretensions, might have recollected, that it had been one of my chief objections to Mr. Fox, that the conduct of the minority had been so absurd, so corrupt and unpopular, that it was not able to resist even the most despotic and violent acts of the administration; that its voice could not be heard, without contempt, ridicule, and suspicion;

so plain a duty, that I know not whether to attribute it to cunning, to cowardice, or to jealousy, that he should have shrunk from it. This point is, however, collateral to the question; which stands simply thus; Did he think Mr. Hastings innocent, why suffer him to be prosecuted? Did he think him guilty; why not cause him to be prosecuted with all the weight and assistance of his own friends, the crown lawyers, and all the authority of the House? Mess. Burgeſs and Roſe, or Roſe and Burgeſs, for I know not your etiquette of precedency, I am told you dabble in politics. What ſay you? Is Haſtings guilty? Who diſappoints the juſtice of the kingdom? Who defrauds the national proceſs of half its dignity? Who prolongs the wrongs of India, and all the crimes, and all the ſhame of England?—Is Haſtings innocent? Who abandons a virtuous miniſter to the malice of a party? Who delivers a hero to ſeven years of legal perſecution? Speak out, gentlemen; but ſpeak with diſcretion. Be ſure you do not tell the people of this country, that the impeachment was connived at, rather than adopted, by miniſters, for the purpoſe of diverting their attention from the Reform; or that of diguſting them with parliaments altogether. Remember, that unaccountably as Gil Blas came to be ſecretary to the prime miniſter, he got, to the full as unexpectedly, into the Tower of Segovia. Therefore, know your ground, and ſpeak from authority.

and that it was unable to procure the least redress, or to resist the greatest oppression.

The second letter was written, as the date proves, after the expulsion of Dumourier from Holland; after the emancipation of Brabant and Flanders; after all the defeats, and the final desertion of this fantastical general, whom M. Mallet du Pan compares to Tamerlane the Great. The battles of the Prince of Saxe Cobourg, upon the Maese and Roer, the recapture of Breda and Gertrudenberg, and the invasion of France, by the victorious armies, might have been considered, all together, I should have thought, as a *public event* of sufficient importance not to have been overlooked by the gentlemen who are so *clair-voyans*, so ready to see into *private motives*.

By these successes, Sir, in my humble opinion, the whole state of affairs was not only changed, but inverted.

Inachias jam venit ad urbes

Dardanus et versis lugebat Græcia fatis.

France, repressed within her own frontier, dispirited and enfeebled, by treachery and defeat, could no longer afford any cause or pretext for immediate apprehension; and we had leisure to turn our eyes homewards, and to consider our own domestic situation, which had become so peculiarly interesting and mysterious, by the craft and fraud of one party, and the violence and depravity of another; where

opinion

opinion had been so artfully shocked and confounded, and passions so wickedly enflamed and exasperated, that we presented a spectacle of madness and desperation, of which there is no parallel in the worst periods of our history. The cause of liberty had been coupled with the cause of France; and the cause of corruption confounded with that of Europe and of civil society: The perpetuity of abuses, the venality of parliaments, the intolerable influence of the court, appeared to be defended by the grenadiers of Bohemia; while there were men who looked for reform, and the return of liberty and virtue, from the successes of such monsters as Custine or Santerre! The constitution seemed forgot in the squabble; and the policy of the court, assisted by the violence of the reformers, had split the nation into two factions, in one of which tyranny was the watch-word, and regicide in the other!

I have more *in petto* to say upon this subject; at present I shall confine myself to ask you, whether it were not become, at this conjuncture, as necessary to watch and suspect the conduct of ministers, as it had ever been to support and invigorate their measures, during the dark and dangerous period which preceded?

I shall now, my dear Sir, enter at once into my subject; *in medias res*; and I take this opportunity to do so, because it will seem to be a direct consequence

deriving from the depraved and scandalous state of parties in this kingdom, that we should either look for one of a purer, honefter, and more popular description, to carry our complaints where they must be heard, and to procure us that redress which must be granted; if we would not expose our whole system to the violence of those, who having right in the beginning, will, of necessity, become guilty before they leave off. Those who teach the people to demand for themselves, will colour their own ambition with the injustice and tyranny of those who will comply with no other requisitions. Both sides, in my opinion, are criminal; but there is one, which is not only unjust, but absurd.

For you, my dear Sir, and a few independent country gentlemen like yourself, I am sure you will forgive the good faith and simplicity with which I speak it; for you, and a few good men like yourself, to imagine you can direct, or that you can moderate between these discordant parties; that you can reconcile their jarring interests, or temper their unprincipled and insatiable ambition, is a thought more vain and more visionary, than what you have objected to the letter-writer. It may be difficult to *form* a pure party, but to attempt to *reform*, or to restrain parties, inured and disciplined in corruption, or to regulate the excesses of men who have learned not to blush, and have left off to feel; who know no passion but the lust of power; and are excited only by envy and competition :

competition: to pretend to awe, or to govern those, whom success makes bold, and power hardens; or those who are become callous or desperate, by disappointment and mortification: I say, for you to imagine you possess this power, is little short of the madness of him who should believe he possessed the ring of Solomon, or the lamp of Aladdin.

When you ask me, therefore, whether it be not *necessary* for an independent member of parliament, who would be of service to his country, to give his confidence to one party or the other, in the House of Commons; I answer you, that it is *impossible*; and that it is so far from being necessary, that in the actual situation of parties, the utmost that you could hope for would be, by strengthening sometimes the one, and sometimes the other, to preserve a species of equilibrium between both, and prevent either from being able to accomplish the complete overthrow of the Constitution. You will be obliged to imitate *Me*, whom you have blamed, and many others who have not confessed their situation; and to lend your support without your confidence, as I have done, and must continue to do, so long as the present vicious and disgraceful system shall prevail in our declining empire. Yes, I have written the word, and I will not recall it. A declining empire, diseased and putrid at the heart; consuming and exhausting the springs of life in distant and violent exertions; bartering liberty for conquest, and health for ornament;

dreſſing itſelf out like a diſtemper'd whore, in paint, and patches, and finery, while all within is ſores, and rags, and rottenneſs, and filth, and corruption, and decay.

In adviſing you to withhold your confidence from either party, I do not counſel you to act an indolent or a negative, no nor a neutral part; neither is it my deſire, that you ſhould act in a conſtant and uniform oppoſition to whichever ſide might appear likely to gain any momentary ſuperiority in the competition. The Oppoſition, by denying the juſtice, the principle, and the neceſſity of the war; and by the indecent and violent means with which it has oppoſed it; by the favour it has publiſhed towards the cauſe of France; and the malignant pleaſure, but ill concealed, with which it has regarded our own errors and diſgraces; has planted a ſtrong and irremovable barrier between itſelf and the object of its ambition. Whatever its partizans can now ſay, will be heard with diſtruſt and ſuſpicion; their juſteſt reclamations will fall pointleſs upon the ground; their known malevolence will diſarm every accuſation; their avowed diſaffection to the cauſe, will be a ſtrong challenge againſt their cleareſt proof and the juſteſt concluſion. You will find, and I am not afraid to predict it, that the abſurd and fatal ill conduct and miſcarriages of the war, which will come ſo naturally before Parliament, will produce no real effect, no perfect conviction there of the indolence and incapacity of

Ministers.

Ministers. You will find, that the inactivity of our fleets, so *unaccountable*, or so *criminal*, will not procure even the slight and illusory atonement of displacing one admiral, or one minister; that the ignorance and want of foresight, which has attended our most successful operations*, will be detailed and proved, and even exaggerated in vain; that the want of concert between the troops and the naval forces, destined to act against Dunkirk, and the absurdity of that undertaking, will all be easily extenuated, or vanish before the greater crimes and turpitude of those who will bring the accusation. And since I am so unguardedly acting the part of a prophet, give me leave to remark to you, that I am neither new nor unhappy in that character; I ventured to foretel, that the profligate conduct of Opposition would render it incapable of deriving any benefit from the mistakes, or ill-conduct of the Ministers; and this prediction has

* At Toulon, though there had been a long negotiation between Lord Hood and the governing people in the town; though Administration will doubtless pretend to have planned and foreseen the surrender of the forts and arsenal; there was not a single engineer officer to take the command of the place. Though not only such an officer, but the necessary regiments in its defence, ought to have been sent out, or at least embarked at Gibraltar. When I heard that a very distinguished naval officer was appointed to the command, I asked of another, no less so, whether he considered himself, or the officer alluded to, to be qualified to defend a fortress. He answered me unequivocally in the negative; he could direct the batteries, but he had no science to repair injuries or accidents, or to defeat the regular approaches of an engineer.

doubtless been realized : for though there is but one sentiment in the kingdom, as far as I am able to discern, respecting the weak and criminal conduct of affairs ; though there is but one opinion with regard to the incapacity, the imbecility, and unfitness of the present Ministers, to conduct the war, or to negotiate with foreign states ; yet, I do not believe that the sanguine opinion entertained of Mr. Fox's superior abilities and vigour in all these respects, has pointed him out to the wishes of any one thinking or reasonable man in the kingdom, as a successor to his rival, or shaken, in the least degree, the firm seat of our present Administration.

But surely the conduct and scheme of this war has been as weak and absurd, as its principle was just, and its necessity was evident. Is it not then deplorable, that this country should see itself, by the depravity and corruption of the best and noblest institutions, reduced to the dilemma of entrusting the conduct of its affairs ; and abandoning its fleets and armies, the bravest that ever nation owned ; its treasure and resources ; its sweat and blood ; to the caprice and ignorance of one set of men, or the bad faith and disaffection of another ? That it should be obliged to chuse between incapacity and treason, between absurdity and ill-will, between folly and malevolence ?

I appeal

I appeal to you, Sir, and to all the world, whether if Mr. Fox had followed the counsels I presumed to offer him at the beginning of the year; if he had given his support to the government, which was exposed, but exposed together with the whole country; if he had disappointed the views and expectations of the factious of every sect and description, by an honourable and unequivocal declaration; if he had proclaimed the justice and necessity of the war, and exhorted the country to engage in it with resolution and unanimity; if he had resenting the injuries and insults offered to it, and the wrongs of Holland, our natural, and *our only natural ally*; I say I appeal to all the world, whether the mistakes and the misconduct of his majesty's ministers during one single campaign, would not have placed him without any effort, any intrigue, any compromise at the head of affairs? and whether he would not have carried with him into power, a great many persons who are now combating against him in both Houses of Parliament, or serving his enemies in various departments of the government, or of the war?

Perhaps, Sir, my scheme of forming a third party in the country, upon public or national principles, may not by this time appear quite so romantic, as upon its first blush it did to you. For if those who admit the justice and necessity of the war, but condemn and lament its ill-conduct, were to rally from every quarter of the kingdom, it is clear that they
could

could not, with any degree of consistency, or with any reasonable hope of redress, assemble round the standard either of the Minister or of Mr. Fox. But had Mr. Fox, whom I invited to become the head of such a party, and in conformity to that invitation, to acknowledge the justice and necessity of the war; had Mr. Fox hearkened to that advice, it is evident that all these persons would before now have enlisted themselves under his banners, and as far as the observation of an individual can extend, and as far as it is reasonable to presume public opinion, from one's own strong but unprejudiced convictions, I am encouraged to say, that this would have described five sixths of the property and the talents of the kingdom; that this party would have consisted of every thinking man, not paid by the intolerable wealth and patronage of the crown, to belong to an exclusive and insulated interest, of every man not corrupted by a profligate court, or implicated with a criminal administration.

But as this gentleman, by a different line of conduct, has forfeited the confidence, nay even the ear of the country, and as the mistakes, errors, and crimes of his Majesty's servants, have but too great a chance and probability of escaping detection, or punishment at least, through the contempt and suspicion into which he and the remnant of his party are fallen, it becomes the duty, as I trust it is yet the privilege of a free and generous spirit, to present these grand delinquents

delinquents to the grand jury of the nation, and to convict them before that tribunal, from which neither power, nor greatness, nor crowds of mercenary friends can protect them, the tribunal of the public opinion; that high and moral court, whose censure, after that of our private thought, is most painful, whose acquittal and applause, are the most dear, the most honourable enjoyments of life.

When I speak of mistakes and crimes, I mean to prove that *both* have been distinctly committed, not but that mistakes are criminal, and highly criminal, in ministers, particularly a repetition of mistakes; conscious by experience of their folly and incapacity, it is their duty to withdraw and yield the reins of government to a stronger wrist, and a mightier mind. The soldier is not shot for being a coward, but the coward is put to death for assuming the character of a soldier. It is not perhaps in our power to be wise or brave, but we are the masters to refuse a post where our folly or our cowardice may be fatal to our country.

The first charge, however, which I shall bring against his Majesty's Servants, will not be of a doubtful or equivocal nature; it will be criminal in its fullest and most comprehensive sense, and I will press it upon the understanding and conscience of every man in the kingdom, whether it could originate in mistake, incapacity, or folly? and be not the true and legitimate offspring of political intrigue,
of

of patronage, and corruption, or of a corrupt compliance and condescension to the peculiar views and caprice of the court? It will be scarcely necessary to point out, that it is the sending of troops to Flanders, and engaging the country in an expensive and unprofitable war upon the continent, which I present as a wilful, corrupt, and deliberate act of delinquency on the part of the King's Ministers; laying my indictment at the feet of the public, and consigning it to the memory and archives of the nation, I impeach the King's servants of this act, as a wilful and premeditated crime; and expecting as I do with ardent vows to heaven, and maturing by every honest and honourable exertion of my own mind and faculties, that period when justice may be done once more upon powerful men, in Great Britain, when the purity and integrity of our Constitution shall be restored to us, and when we shall be freed from the noxious and blasting influence of courts, from the corruption of parliaments, from the torpor, indifference and despair of the nation; I say expecting that happy term, I prefer my charge.

I denounce then at the bar of the public opinion, and I take all England, nay the world and posterity for my judges; I denounce the criminality of the King's Ministers, in engaging the country in a continental war, against the known interests and policy of Great-Britain, against the most evident convictions, against the most constant experience of the folly, extravagance

gance and danger of such a plan! and I assert, that such acts are in themselves criminal, absolutely and irrelatively to other events, which can only explain or illustrate the guilt of them, but cannot add to it or increase it.

Thus, for instance, though our arms have been dishonoured in the West-Indies, though the expeditions against Martinico and Guadaloupe have miscarried, for the want of these very troops who were miscarrying from the folly or treachery of Ministers, before the walls of Dunkirk; I say though our attempts against the enemy's colonies in that rich western Archipelego, which was pointed out by the finger of common sense, and of nature herself, to recompense our maritime and commercial island, for the dangers and expences of the war; though our attempts have failed, and our interests and honour have been sacrificed and neglected, all this can add nothing to the positive guilt of engaging the kingdom in a continental war; but it is a strong and irrefragable proof of the mischiefs and disgrace which have resulted from that guilty conduct.

The best Englishmen and the wisest politicians, have always dreaded this terrible scourge, from the connexion of our princes with a German electorate; but since at length we possessed a *native* sovereign, there was reason to hope that the English interest might predominate in the councils of St. James's:

The

The passions, the prejudices of a British King, in favour of his German principality, were no longer likely to warp his Ministers from the plain policy of the country, and to involve a mighty nation in the municipal brawls of the empire. That Hanover so often preferred to the English diadem, which was sisted for by our kings upon the first throne of Europe, which we found them regretting, while they held in their hands the umpire and arbitrement of the world,

————— *Quem fertur regia Juno*

Posthabitâ coluisse samo —————

That Hanover, seemed at last to have found its true weight in the scale, and the worst danger we had reasonably to apprehend from it, was the giving a foreign education to the younger branches of our royal family, and adding a few more denizens to the German colony at Pimlico: by what fatality, by what determined treachery, my dear Sir, could it then happen, that without passions to flatter, or prejudices to comply with, without even that base excuse or subterfuge of deference or submission to Cæsar, we should find ourselves unexpectedly compromised, under the first British prince of the illustrious family on the throne, and under a Tory Administration, the chief merit of which it hath sometime been, to oppose and to finish these continental wars; I say how does it happen that with all these circumstances in our favour, we should find ourselves treading back the footsteps of those guilty and unfortunate times, when the
spirit

spirit of compliant Whigs devoted our armies on the plains of Fontenoy, or before the ravins of Mount-Cassel!

Will it be pretended that we owed this *good turn* to the House of Austria, for the diversion it had caused in favour of Holland? I acknowledge the service, but was the debt so great, that the gratuitous part we had taken in the war since the happy accomplishment of that object, could neither extinguish nor diminish it? Could we cause no diversion in our turn, with two hundred and eighty vessels of war, which barred, or might have barred, the ports of France, and blockaded her harbours, in the ocean and the Channel, as well as in the Mediterranean? Are our subsidies, our stores nothing? Are not they to be counted towards balancing this mighty debt to Austria? Are the stipendiary forces of Piedmont and Savoy nothing? Are our contracts with Hesse and Hanover nothing? Is the King of Prussia preserved to the alliance by the weight and interest, and I fear the treasure of England nothing? Are Florence, Genoa, coerced by the terror of our Fleets, are the manifestos of Mr. Drake and my Lord Hervey nothing? Oh, sentiment divine of gratitude so rare in the bosom of statesmen, so new in the history of nations!—Oh, amiable Court of Saint James's! Oh, fortunate Chancery of Vienna!

*Oh debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome, still paying, still to owe!*

But

But I fear, Sir, and I am compelled in candour to confess my fear, that the relief of Maëstricht and the victories of Monsieur de Cobourg, are not the only obligations we may be held to lie under to the House of Austria; or at least that if we have no further obligations to acquit, we have errors to repair, and injuries to expiate! I fear that the failure of the siege of Maubeuge is carried to the debtor side of the account, and that the bill is swelled not only by our fatal obstinacy in dividing the allied forces, to undertake that of Dunkirk, but by the critical assistance we received after our misfortunes before it. The main body of the army extended its incursions from Quesnoy to the gates of Peronne and St. Quentin's, and might have sat down before Maubeuge or Cambrai, but was compelled to a virtual inactivity, while no contemptible portion of its force was led through the enemy's country from Valenciennes to Dunkirk, along the fortified roads and intrenched posts of the French, fatigued and diminished by continual and useless skirmishes, taking villages by storm, blockading farms, and investing parishes. While Tournay and Courtray offered a secure march, and the army would have arrived by a route scarce at all circuitous, and free from every obstacle and danger, sooner and unimpaired in the country where it was destined to act*.

*After the taking of Valenciennes, in consequence of a long march and successful movements, the enemy retiring every way before it, Maubeuge became blockaded; the Duke of York was at Orchies,
from

But when the British army arrived at Dunkirk, I must ask of the most determined partizan of government, whether supposing the policy of that unfortunate expedition, and the policy of not only weakening but offending Monsieur de Saxe-Cobourg, I must ask of him whether it were politic too, that there should exist no concert nor understanding between the Board of Admiralty and the Board of Ordnance, and between neither of these and the army? Whether it were politic that the gun-boats and battering vessels should have been constructing at Woolwich when they ought to have been in the channel, and the balls yet uncast at Carron which were destined to level the Ramparts of Dunkirk?*

from whence the army began its march on the 15th of August, through Cifoin, and Lannoy, near which places it encamped on the successive evenings, the next day it arrived at Menin, near which it crossed the Lys on Pontons. In the evening the guards repassed the Lys at Menin, (the bridge of Pontons having been removed) for Lincelles.

* The author of this letter, for obvious reasons, cannot pledge himself to *prove* this fact. He however asserts it upon his own perfect knowledge, and he defies the King's servants, and the Master General of the Ordnance in particular, to *disprove* it. When there came an order to the Warren for 80,000 balls, there was not half that number in this great arsenal of the kingdom—the ships of war were obliged to sail without their complete armament, and amongst the crews of several ships of the line, there was not a single cutlass. Fortunately the *Nymph*e was not amongst this class or number. He asserts this fact with the *same* defiance!

Let me ask too, I care not of whom, for all the wealth of the treasury could not buy, nor all the impudence of party supply more than one answer, whether supposing the policy of a continental war, it were politic too to discourage and dispirit our brave troops, by the most dreadful species of neglect in the provision of the hospitals, in the choice of the Surgeons? Profusion has reigned in every other department, but it remains to be proved, that avarice and parsimony were the causes of the deficiency in this—The drugs were of the worst quality, though the quantity was an impediment to the movement of the hospitals, and is in itself a proper object of public enquiry, and scarcely one man in ten who was sent out knew the nature of a gun shot wound—The number of brave-fellows who have fallen victims to their ignorance, is a subject upon which the callous minds of Ministers can scarce think with indifference. The wounded officers have all had leave to come home, the poor privates, alas, could not meet with this indulgence, *‘ Animæ viles inbumata infleaque turba !’* But the voice of humanity, but the national honour and character, will surely provoke a parliamentary enquiry. Mr. Hunter is no more, or he might in his own vindication have condescended to inform us, by what job the recommendation to these appointments was separated from his office, or by what casuistry he could defend it to his conscience or the country, to have given a diploma to a parcel of raw Scots lads, to maim, and mutilate, and murder the British troops, because of
 their

their interest in a burgh or a corporation? He might perhaps have told the public how many of these surgeons or their mates, he had appointed, and whether they passed their examination before him or the clerks in the treasury?

Εὐτυχὲς ἰατρὸς, οὗτι τὰς μὲν ἐπιτυχίας ὁ Ἥλιος ὄρα, τὰς δὲ ἀποτυχίας ἡ Γῆ καλυπτέει.

While the sollicitude of Ministers was divided between Flanders and their villas, while they scoured through the country, now to councils and now to dinners, pursued by couriers sometimes, and sometimes by admirals and commanders in chief, the astonished kingdom beheld with mixed indignation and gratitude, our West-India fleet laden with five millions of property at the least, bringing an aid of a million sterling to the revenue, and two thousand of our best and bravest seamen, to man the royal navy; I say it beheld with mixed sentiments of gratitude and indignation, our invaluable merchantmen enter the channel under the protection of *an eight and twenty gun frigate*. Ashamed of the disgraceful danger we had run, we scarce dared to be thankful, frightened even at our unmerited escape we were too proud to rejoice, with a sullen but an honourable silence we received this boon of heaven, which had waded our argosies, through the fleets and cruisers of our enemy into our own ports, with no convoy but fortune, no admiral but Providence!

Give me leave to pause for a moment hère, not to comment upon the crime, but to withdraw my eyes from a spectacle so hideous, so full of fear and dishonour—our heads grow giddy when we look calmly down from the precipice, from which an accident or a miracle has preserved us.

And now let me ask you, my dear Sir, who possess as much good sense, and as much candour also, as any man existing, of you who have an opinion and a vote to give in this extraordinary trial, of you by whom other men, I speak not merely of your friends or your constituents, by whom other men, who know your independence and your integrity, and who place confidence in your abilities and discernment, may regulate their own opinions and conduct; let me ask of you whether it be possible, I mean consistently with our public duties, to overlook all this neglect and supineness, or to excuse the criminal plan laid down in the cabinet for the conduct of the war, and the absurd and defective execution of that criminal plan by the several boards and departments of Government? Let me ask of you, whether it be a sufficient satisfaction and atonement to the people of these kingdoms to displace an odious minister, or an ill tempered admiral, or to fix the *unpunished* guilt upon the Admiralty, or the Ordnance? That the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Commander in Chief of the naval forces of Great Britain despise and detest each other, is no secret to the country

at large, and the country at large is very willing to range upon either, or upon both sides of so just a dispute. To turn out the Duke of Richmond may gratify the spleen, envy, and ill-nature of ministers, and coincide, in some degree, with the wishes of the nation; to force my Lord Chatham to decide between the Admiralty Board, where his apparition is a phœnomenon, and White's Club, where his absence would be considered as a fearful omen of public misfortune, might lull the public complaints and anxiety for one day, but could not, nor ought to do it for a second. Still it is singular that every accusation is dropped, and all animosity extinguished; for it is not here, "*duo si discordia vexat inertes:*" Tacitus has an expression somewhere, which describes the case with greater truth and precision—" *Conscientia criminis*, says he, *pro amicitia est:*"—To be in a common fault is a species of friendship; (you see I translate for the Attorney-General). After what I have said, and, I trust, after what you know of my disposition, you will not think me particularly anxious to require the immediate dismissal or punishment of any of the King's servants; though, were I consulted, I should feel myself obliged to advise it. But I cannot help being somewhat surprized, that such a measure has not been judged prudent and political, considering the great disappointment of the public expectation, and the miscarriage and disgrace which has attended so many of our expeditions. Indeed, Sir, I am of opinion, that the root lies deep and branches

wide, which enables Administration to sit so firm, and to feel so secure, under so great a weight of political discontent and disappointment; and I suspect, that any family, which can so far brave and deride the public opinion, must be grown somewhat too powerful, both for the safety of the country and its own!

If we were to throw our eye together over the composition of the Cabinet, I think we should find matter not only for astonishment but for alarm: At the head of all, the Minister, his brother presiding over the Admiralty; his cousin one Secretary of State, his creature the other! To preserve any kind of equilibrium or counterpoise to this enormous weight, fatigues the policy, and exhausts the genius of the Court: The balance of Europe never employed so much thought, cabal, and intrigue, as the balance of the Cabinet of Saint James's. For this Lord Hawkesbury watches and trembles; for this all colour has forsworne his cheek, and the pen shakes in his indefatigable fingers! But it is not here alone that the ministerial family seems to have obtained an undue preponderance; we might contemplate it in another point of view, where it seems to hold the compliant conscience of Parliament; and threatening now reform, and now dissolution, is as powerful at Westminster, as it is suspected, or formidable at St. James's. Shall we strengthen this ambitious House, which is new to the country? Are we certain that we should not entail a private despo-

nobly;

tism over the Crown and the House of Commons ? I am sure you think too justly, too honestly, too nobly ; you have family, you have property in the kingdom ; you have a stake too great, both in mind and body, to be committed to adventurers. If we were to examine the conduct of affairs since they took possession of the helm, what promise have they kept with the people, what right have they restored, what advantage have they obtained for it ? We will not rake the cinders of Oczacow ; we will not pursue them to Nootka-Sound ; history, posterity will judge them, and with them that pernicious and dishonourable principle, that it is permitted to arm where it is not permitted to go to war, and that a generous and mighty nation may threaten where it dares not, or cannot fight,

Habitet secum & sit pectore in illo.

Neither will I lead you, for the present at least, to examine into the artifice and duplicity which miscarried in the Commercial Treaty with Ireland, nor the undisguised fraud and impudence which made the Declaratory Bill successful in Great-Britain. The prodigality with which the favours of the Crown have been lavished, and the malignity with which the hopes or pretensions of particular families, too proud or too honest to worship the political idol of the day, have been disappointed. The creation of new orders of *exploded chivalry*, and the extension of the most honourable and distinguished of the old interest, I have already slightly remarked in the letters to which

I have alluded. It is true, the crime and turpitude of all these things is more than doubled by the insolence and mockery with which they are perpetrated, at a period of time when Parliaments have declared the necessity of abolishing the influence of the Crown; and the Ministers of the Crown, the necessity of setting bounds to the corruption of Parliaments! And it is true too, that those persons who have accused the Minister with having adopted the dangerous and ungrateful policy of degrading and dishonouring Parliaments, and reducing them to be the mere instruments and registers of the will of the Court, have derived an unexpected strength to their arguments from the ostentation with which prodigality has been announced, and the impudence with which it has been defended. And though these persons will, it is to be hoped, find some difficulty in procuring proselytes to their opinion, it would be uncandid in us, not to acknowledge, that it would have been easier to repel their charge; if the vice and corruption of the House of Commons had not been exposed with so much acrimony, and so much address by the Minister himself; if it had not been violently dissolved and humiliated in 1784, and encouraged and incited from that period to the present, to set the petitions for reform at defiance, and to deny to the prayers of the people the abolition of a single dilapidated borough!

Nothing

Nothing appears to me so dangerous in public affairs, as to leave accusations, no matter how false or improbable, if they are attended with a species of plausibility, unanswered and unrefuted; because the family of Accusations is not only prolific, but multipaous; and because, notwithstanding their serpent origin, they do not always rise to destroy one another, but sometimes unite and embrace, and defend and promote one another, with all the zeal and adherence of Scotch consanguinity and connection.— Let us return to the Cabinet.

I do not only suspect, as I have already expressed to you, that a certain House may be grown too powerful; in consequence of which, it may not only appear safe to pardon, or to overlook particular acts of negligence and delinquency, but unsafe to punish or to dismiss, or in any shape to vary, or disturb the nice equilibrium of the balance. But I fear, and I more than fear, for I am convinced of it, and confirmed in it, by my observation, and conversation with other persons, more able to judge and determine, in such a matter, than I can pretend to be, that the King's servants deceive themselves, and mistake the ground they stand upon in the public opinion; an error the more easy, and not the less fatal, for them to fall into, since the terror held out to the public opinion, by the severity of some late prosecutions and punishments. Certainly, my dear Sir, if the fears of one side of the press, or the profligacy
of

of the other, have induced the King's servants to consider the distrust and dislike we bear to some of those who oppose them, as confidence or affection towards themselves; if they vainly and falsely interpret our aversion to anarchy and revolutions, into any approbation of their own conduct or maxims of Government; if they will not distinguish between our just hatred of others and our just suspicion of themselves, between our *consternation* and *sorrow* at their own ignorance and imbecility, and our greater dread of the principles and designs of those who possess more vigour and ability; I say, Sir, if they are lulled by the delusions of self-love and vanity into this fond belief, it is to be feared their errors cannot long remain undetected, nor be finally discovered, without some fatal prejudice to the peace and tranquillity of the nation. For though it is difficult to foresee, or at least would be vain and confident to declare, with precision, the period of any delusion, it is not only safe, but it is modest to assert, that the people cannot for ever consent or submit to be guided through the wilderness of our present politics by this pillar of smoke, which knows no alteration of light; and that, fatigued with its wanderings, and sick of its diet, it will demand other leaders, or, perhaps, other Gods.

The terror of French examples, and the hatred of French principles, have been artfully excited and encouraged by the partizans of Ministers; I say artfully,

fully, not because it has been done unjustly, but because it has been done with design; the cry of “Jacobin, Jacobin,” has been bellowed so loudly in our ears, that we have grown at last deaf to it, just as those who make it, shut their eyes while they make it, that they may roar the louder. But this cry would not have echoed so constantly to our organs, the ministerial tocsin would not have rung so uninterruptedly in every parish of the kingdom, for the sole purpose of exciting our detestation of the crimes and massacres that were committing in France! Thank God, there was no necessity to imbue the minds of Englishmen with hatred, and with horror, against murderers, and the murderers of women and of Kings. The example of France too had ceased to be dangerous as soon as ever her arms became so. Since the 10th of August, or the 30th of September at latest, in the year 1792, Europe has not been exposed to the danger of being corrupted, but of being conquered by the Republic; she has not been exposed to be deluded, but to be over-run; she has not been threatened with sophisms and paradoxes, but with bayonets and canon; she is not invaded by seditious principles and revolutionary writings, but by barbarous hordes, which misery vomits from their native land, which despair, a moral, and hunger a physical necessity, compell to conquer, and their adopted principles to desolate mankind. No, Sir, the cry so artfully encouraged and prolonged, was prolonged at least, to answer the purposes of party
and

and of corruption at home. The Jacobins, who were represented in such odious colours, and pointed out to so much suspicion and persecution, were not always those who had put all the property, and all the lives in France, under a constant state of requisition, and lined her extended frontiers with armed peasants, compelled to march from her center; it was not always the Jacobins who threatened, and who threaten still to deluge Europe with their *nationality* and their pikes; but the Jacobins, who wished to reform the abuses of the Court, and secure the liberty and independency of Parliaments; the Jacobins, who would have been worshipped at the Revolution, and who threatened to restore the constitution to the principles which prevailed, or were recognized at the Revolution. These were more terrible to our placemen and courtiers, than the Jacobins, that were destroying the very principle of property, and levelling every hedge, and removing every land-mark in Europe. Could there have been at such a time, and during scenes like the present, an indifferent spectator in any part of our trembling quarter of the globe, it must have smiled to observe the vigilance and activity of the war which had been declared against the booksellers, while that which was waged against the Republic, seemed liable to all the demurrers and interlocutors of a Court of Chancery; he would have contrasted the vigour of the crown-lawyers, and their victories too, with the caution of our Admirals, and with their miscarriages;

he would have compared the manifestoes of the Attorney-General with the informations of the Minister; and I fear, Sir, he would have more than smiled, to contemplate the triumphs of Government, atchieved, not by our fleets and armies, but by our justices and juries, our prisons more filled with printers than with Frenchmen, and the circuits so much more glorious and successful than the campaign! I will not indulge the pleasantry that suggests itself unwillingly to my mind; unwillingly, indeed, for it is in spite of our misfortunes and dishonour.—To return.

There certainly was no longer any danger of our imitating the French Revolution. France might still preach, indeed; but emaciated and expiring in her bath of blood, with all her scribes around her, she did not present so lovely a picture to the eye, nor address such winning sentences to the ear or heart, that we needed to dread the influence either of her precepts or her example. But what at first sight seems unaccountable, the danger that had succeeded to this was at least as carefully concealed and dissembled by the Court and the Cabinet, as ever the preceding ones had been by the Opposition, or the Reformers. A learned Gentleman has written a very laborious pamphlet (I mean laborious to read, for I think too well of his talents to suspect he found any great difficulty in the composition) for the purpose of explaining to us the “real grounds of the war.” But with the leave of the learned Gentleman, (*“quem dii donent tonsore,”*) may he soon be a Serjeant) he has con-
founded

founded the grounds of the war with the circumstances that made it impossible to delay hostilities beyond the month of February, 1793. It is not an information nor an indictment against the National Convention, that it should have been required of the learned Gentleman's industry to draw up, it is not an accusation against those who are already condemned, nor is it a cold enumeration of their various follies and delinquencies that could have justified the enormous promise of his title-page. I expected, I confess, when I took up his pamphlet, that he would have told us what were the causes of the war, which had not yet been avowed by his majesty's servants; or, at least, that he would have defended and established all those which they had hitherto assigned for it. To say the truth, I was at least disappointed, but the learned Gentleman shall experience no asperity from me. When I find, in the month of November his Majesty's Ministers publishing THEIR "REAL GROUNDS OF THE WAR," and find these grounds concealed and dissembled in the Royal Manifesto, it would be unpardonable, indeed, not to pardon JOHN BOWLES ESQUIRE! But it would be, I think, more unpardonable; nay, I think it were an act of cowardice or treachery to suppress one's feelings, upon all this base and dishonourable chicanery. Those who arrogate to themselves to speak in a nation's name, should at least be capable of assuming, for a moment, the national character and sincerity. They should distinguish between their habitual dissimulation

simulation and falsehood as Ministers, and those periodical acts of state, which are authenticated and impressed with the characters of truth by name or signature of the Sovereign! The real ground of this war is to repel invasion, to resist oppression, to defend the laws, the liberty, the religion, the hearths, the fields, of Great Britain; the ground of the war is the ground we stand upon; it is our native soil, upon which we rear our children, which hides the dear and sacred remains of our beloved progenitors! Let me resume myself—What is it we are fighting for? for the ancient Monarchy in France? Heaven forbid! For the Constitutional Monarchy and the Jacobins of 1789, as vile and criminal, though not so able, or so bold as those of 1792? Still Heaven forbid! To destroy the Republic under any pretence? Oh, Heaven forbid! Why then have we combined all Europe in a common cause? And why do we cover the ocean with our fleets, and the continent with our tents? To compress within the girdle of their state, a ferocious race, who have declared an internecinary war, against every establishment, every form of human polity, every order of civil life and society; who have trampled upon every tie, every duty, every principle which connects men together, who have broke through every attachment, either local, or natural, or civil, who have made all property common, and put the persons, the property, the professions, and the will of men at the public requisition? Who sweep with indiscriminating fury, the inhabitants from

from the villages, and drive their peasants from the plough to the slaughter-house, indifferent to their losses, impenetrable to pity or remorse; a race, who have forsworn commerce and the peaceful arts, who have left their fields unfown, while they meditate the plunder of foreign harvests; who have left their houses desolate and forlorn, while they threaten with conquest and extermination, the towns, the farms, the cottages of surrounding nations.

These are the causes of the war, and the causes too why all the questions that regard a peace are so vain and illusory? Why should we treat (I speak not now of the national character and glory) why should we treat? Will treaties bind this furious people? No: they must perceive their own madness, and punish their own criminals before any power can treat with them; and they must return to principles, and to arts, and employments too, before we or other states can lay down our arms with security. We cannot make peace, because if we made peace, they would only be the more intent and the more powerful to make war; but it is singular that the King's Servants, who I am not afraid to affirm, deserve every punishment, if they make the war or would make the peace upon different principles, should preserve the silence and discretion of their advocate, since one would naturally imagine their cause would derive credit and popularity from the carefull and elaborate display, either he or themselves are so well calculated to
make

make of them. But when the conduct of the war is so criminal, and so unfortunate, there is some policy, or rather cunning, I think, in dissembling the importance of the stake. I submit to you, Sir, whether even this act of baseness and duplicity, could have been safely put in practice, without a greater degree of power and security than any one family ought to feel or to possess?

I appeal, therefore, to you once more, whether it be possible to give confidence (I speak not now of support, but believe me, it is a terrible situation, both for the country, and for the peace and conscience of individuals, to be obliged to separate confidence from support) to give confidence to one imperious family, or to one overbearing Minister, who either knows not, or conceals the political state of Europe, and of the kingdom; who having conquered Parliament, is enabled to brave and defy the People; who having publicly broken his word with the People, has entrenched himself behind a hedge of parliamentary corruption, of titles, places, pensions, and ribbands, till he sits secure of punishment, and impenetrable to shame?

*Ob si testiculi vena vlla paterni
Viveret in nobis !*

“ We are so far,” says my Lord Bolingbroke, in some part of his political writings, “ from possessing the virtues of our ancestors, that we have not inhe-

rited even the spirit and manliness of their vices." This was no doubt addressed to the feelings of those whom the prostituted Minister of his time had corrupted, or whom corruption enabled the Minister to insult and set at defiance. What would that ardent spirit, that eloquent tongue, have said to us, had he survived into our time, and beheld all the vices, all the corruption of Walpole, near the throne; without his love for the Constitution, his good-nature, or sincerity?*

* The press was never more free than under Sir Robert Walpole's Administration. He engaged mercenary writers it is true, but not with more taste or discernment, nor to a greater extent, than is actually practised by Government: the field, however, was open to his antagonists; and during the whole period of his power, the despotism of informations, and the servility of Attornies and Solicitors General were never directed, as they have since been, to crush the liberty of opinion, and stifle the very murmurs of liberty.

Unlike to some of his successors, this man was not *nulla virtute redemptus a vitiis*; he possessed some of the sterling virtues of the country, though they were frequently extinguished or obscured by the vices of his situation: he was not a hypocrite even in corruption; and though he was enough a Minister to bribe, he was too much an Englishman to oppress. He loved peace, because he thought it was necessary to the commerce and prosperity of his country: if he subsidized the electors of the empire, or the kings of the north, it was to preserve peace, and to gratify, without the expence, and the calamities of war, that German *Στοργη* which he found to be uncontrollable in the Princes on the throne. His vices were prominent from the blunt English sincerity of his character; and even these may be regretted in England as often as his virtues shall be wanting in successors, who shall possess and exceed them all; and whenever the hypocrites and pharisees

his brother Horace, patient, vigilant, indefatigable in business, he had beheld a brother, negligent, ignorant, indolent, inaccessible, presiding over the very first active department in the war, but invisible to an officer, and a stranger at his own board? What if the foreign seals in the hands of another relation, pushed up to premature honours, and the counterpart, in vanity and inexperience, to his cousin? *Ob generis fiducia!* What if another Minister, whom it would be a libel to describe by any thing but his offices, holding the sceptre of India in one hand, and the Secretary's seals in the other, enthroned in Leadenhall-street, and cringing at St. James's; presiding besides over another board of equal emolument, and almost equal importance, not to mention I know not how many offices and sinecures in Scotland? What if he discovered another Scotsman at the head of the Court of Chancery,* forming a party under

risees of Administration shall offer profane and ostentatious thanks in the Temple, that they are not as this Publican!

* It may be thought I have said little of this important profligate, and it may be attributed to fastidiousness. But I caution the public against drawing such an inference from my reserve. I protest I respect my Lord Loughborough as much, I think, as any of his Majesty's Ministers; and I deem him, in many respects, a fit person to preside over the Court of Chancery. As to his being a Scotsman, it is doubtless his misfortune; but I think the objection would have come better when Rome was Rome, while we could have punished the treacheries of our Alban neighbour

under the patronage and connivance of a man, whether he be a Minister or not, I defy any one to tell me: a King's friend (as if Kings had friends) a King's favourite, the eye-sore of every Administration, the enemy and the accomplice of every Minister: cold, cowardly, and callous, intriguing, plotting, balancing, undermining, overthrowing every man and every system by turns; too base and timid to trust himself in the noon and glare of power, shrinking and creeping in the rank shade and thicket of favour; like the baleful ivy that climbs and tangles round our royal oak, blasting the noble pith with its chill gratitude, blighting the verdant arms with its accursed embraces? What, I say, if he saw such a man providing resources and palliatives, applying his *orvietan* or *catholicon*, his political nostrums and quackeries,

or at least despised them, with a sound conscience, and with unwrung withers; and while it was of consequence to our feelings of honour, as well as to our interests, who were the guardians of our rights, and the oracles of our laws; before it had been dreamed that courts of judicature might become instruments of ministerial revenge or policy; and while there seemed no less reason to dread unjust decisions between man and man, than between the subject and the crown. For my own part, I am happy to see this noble lawyer placed where his sentences can neither be liable to the suspicion nor the temptation of complacency to the Court. And I rejoice, in the present crisis of affairs, not only to behold him where he is, but to miss him where he is no longer. I will not weigh a hundred Dunkirks (a town, by the bye, not unapt to prove fatal to Chancellors) nor the expence of providing for all his clan at Toulon, nor all the salaries, the half-pay, and the pensions that untenable town still costs us, against the purity, the unspotted character of one court of common law!

to protect the Crown against its own servant; forming subdivisions of parties, and subdividing these, marshalling Court Lords, and instructing Court Members, appointing Chancellors, and Presidents, and Privy Seals; and all to protect the King against the overbearing influence of his own Minister? Ah, what would he not have said? He would have shaken our astonished souls; his patriot accents would have quivered in our degenerate hearts, would have roused the Briton-part of us, the *Divinae partikulam auræ*.

Oh, Bolingbroke! thou hadst not founded a trumpet in a deaf man's ear! Truth, the necessity of thy soul; Virtue, the genius of thy birth; and Honour, the nurse and Mentor of thy whole nature; all had spoken to us in thee! Thy lips, where Eloquence, where Conviction sat; thy classic lips, whence Reason and Persuasion flowed in mingling streams; thy ardent spirit, and thy tongue of fire, had broke the sleep of slaves, and stung the souls of tyrants! St. John, awake! break through thy Runic slumber: reach me thy pen of flame, to which the fall of hypocrites and traitors is promised and reserved by Fate! Or rather come thou, like some heaven-favoured hero, to dispel the mist that hangs upon our eyes, and hangs upon our souls! Come, and dispel the charms of that accursed enchantress, that Circean hag, CORRUPTION! CORRUPTION! that deforms our character, depraves our mind, and brutalizes our

existence! Bid us be men once more; the noblest of the race of men, be Britons!

It is very natural, my dear Sir, and I had the pleasure to find you fully sensible of the importance of the observation, to consider the relative weakness of Ministry, at a time when there is hardly any visible opposition to it in Parliament; and when that opposition is become both hateful and contemptible in the eyes of the nation. The fears and artifices of Government too, are so much the more worthy of our attention at the present moment, because its positive strength is so enormously preponderant, that it is evident there must exist some secret moral counterpoise to so great a physical inequality. When we contemplate an Administration so powerful, as I think has no parallel in the free history of our country, strengthened not only by numerous and important desertions, but by the common apprehension and danger of all the proprietors in the kingdom; I say, when we see such an Administration trembling and wavering, and wanting courage to announce to us all the real dangers that surround us, it is clear either that it is itself conscious of its own incapacity and inability to extricate us from them, and of errors and crimes committed by it, of which the fatal consequences can be only concealed by dissembling the perilous situation of the country: or else that it is itself curbed and pressed down by the weight of some superior, but invisible power. Another circumstance, which

which I think well worthy your reflection, is the great degree of caution with which, notwithstanding all their antipathy to Jacobins and Republicans, the King's servants have avoided to pledge themselves against treating with the French regicides. Even the declaration of my Lord Auckland, before they would assume its defence, was emasculated in the translation, with an affected ignorance of the French language, and a wilful violation of one of the commonest of its idioms. Now, Sir, why all this anxiety in Ministers to keep some postern for negociation, some pretence in reserve, some hope or contingency for treating? *Usque adeone mori miserum est?* Are they determined in case of final discomfiture and humiliation, to treat with the Jacobins rather than resign? When they have ruined us by the war, will they not be contented without dishonouring us by the peace? Believe me, the scabbard is thrown away, if we cannot make the next peace as masters, or as umpires rather, we can only have the name of peace, with all the expence, and all the anxiety, and more than all the dangers of war. But if the war is to continue to be carried on with the same absurdity and negligence, which has hitherto given us so many occasions for regret and consternation, there is no doubt but that it will compel us to make such a peace: and will not the King's servants even *then* abandon the ungrateful task to the friends of whoever may happen to be the Brissot of the day; to those British patriots, the dearness of whose connection with our enemies,

may win from their relenting nature, some milder terms of ruin, some breathing time between the disarming and the destruction of Carthage?

The situation of France is such, that she must conquer and over-run all Europe, or be conquered and restrained by it. That nation, consisting of twenty-four millions of inhabitants, is divided into soldiers and husbandmen; and the first class, let its losses be what they will, is perpetually renewed and recruited from the second. Confiscation has hitherto replenished the treasury: instead of taxation, now an obsolete, or anti-revolutionary term, the pillage of the rich, and the ransom of the suspected, have liberally supplied the enormous exigencies of the state. There is no bankruptcy, because there is no book: there is no stoppage, because there is no account: without foreign commerce, the assignat is necessarily at par; and since the danger is found so great to possess, or to be thought to possess, specie or bullion, it is not impossible that it should bear in its turn an agio over those troublesome and perilous metals, against which it has so long been indignantly discounted: there is no property but that of the nation; every arm, and every *portefeuille*, are at the immediate disposal of the Convention; the whole treasure and force of the empire are moved and directed by a single committee, which possesses more power, and not less foresight and activity than Louvois and the ministers of Lewis the Fourteenth: and never did the vain device of that
ambitious

ambitious tyrant, in the zenith of his ascendancy over Europe, become his escutcheon half so well as it would these new and sanguinary colours, which opposed to all the earth, have scarce lost an inch of ground in the extended struggle. To conceal the strength and resources of the enemy, is, in my mind, as weak and vain, as it is cowardly and base. What hope that we should resist and surmount the dangers which we tremble to look upon, and which those who lead us to the onset conceal with fraud and artifice from our eyes? We are told, however, that such a system cannot endure; that these violent exertions must end quickly in lassitude and impotency. I am not of this opinion. I think this system, and these exertions, may very probably outlast every other system, and conquer all other exertions: and I think so, because I observe these other systems not only to be decayed and corrupted, but impelled and precipitated to their fall, by the folly or treachery of those who ought rather to repair and invigorate them, and because I observe those exertions directed rather to defend the rottenness and vermin of these systems, than to oppose the shock from without, or to strengthen the arsenal within.

The enigma of the state of France is simply this, why do men submit to be placed in a state of perpetual requisition; how have they been induced to believe that in whatever they acquire or possess, that in their houses, their fields, and their bodies, they

are only trustees and fiduciary committees for the public? Neither terror nor enthusiasm appear to me to account satisfactorily for this moral phenomenon; individuals have felt, or professed to feel, this sublime of patriotism, in every age, because in every age, admiration and popularity have been discounted against tranquillity and against gold: but such a sentiment has not become common or universal, notwithstanding the sophistry and the panegyrics of so many orators and philosophers, and the romances of so many poets, and historians. In the Fable of Curtius or the history of the Decii, there is here as much of vanity at least, and there as much of despair, as there is of patriotism and self-devotedness to the public cause; the deed of Brutus, Manlius, Virginius, and so many others, were no doubt held up rather as objects of admiration in the schools of Rome, than of example and imitation; the sternness and ferocity of the Roman character during the republican age, have probably been chiselled in a deep relief by the best of their historians, who when they spoke of the ancient manners and simplicity, betrayed frequently as much as it was safe for them to do of their antipathy to the corruption and abuses of their own age.

The drama of Corneille, and some of the plays of Shakespear have familiarized the most enlightened countries of Europe with this caricature of their manners, and the effect of that vulgar and exaggerated opinion, has been frequently very distinct in the progress of the revolution. We find the younger Brutus speaking with doubt and dif-

fidence, and consoling himself at length by profound reflexion, and philosophical arguments, for that extraordinary act, which has made him so celebrated amongst mankind. *Postquam illud conscivi facinus*, is an expression made use of by himself with regard to it; and in the whole of the letter in which it is to be found, if my memory does not deceive me, you will observe him speaking of it, not only with modesty but with doubt, and anxious to justify it to his own mind, rather than to vaunt or boast of it to his vain, but wavering correspondent. But it would lead very far from the object of this Letter, were I to undertake to defend the republicans of Rome from all that imputation of ferocity, which, I think, has very unjustly been fastened upon their manners. It is sufficient for my argument that their *facinora*, which I understand rather in a doubtful than an accusatorial sense, made very few proselytes amongst them, and never converted any sect or society of men, much less the majority or mass of their nation; and I should think it a fair inference, that the barbarities and massacres of France were as little calculated to operate so general a conversion; as for terror, I think it might have had its effect, while the nation looked calmly down upon the crimes of its first knots of banditti; that it might have imposed a momentary astonishment or silence, while the first heads were spiked, and the first victims mangled at Paris, but that it never could have caused all that activity, all that concurrence and competition in cruelty, that rival race

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in guilt and horror that has been run by every department, every district, every municipality, every contemptible club and section of the empire. I think, therefore, we must look for some other principle to account for the extraordinary spectacle which we are considering. These men who suffer so horrible a tyranny, who breathe so oppressive a fanaticism, why do they submit to it? because they eat, because they drink, because they have a physical sufficiency, which the hard heart and habitual tyranny of their Lords denied them before. The French, I believe, in my conscience, are the most corrupt, the most wicked, and the most sanguinary nation upon the face of this earth, but they are not a stupid nor a dull one. They compare the past tyranny with the present, and prefer the present, because the first, like the interrogators of their Bastilles, reduced and exhausted the body before it began to intimidate or excruciate the mind; and the second, with all its cruelties, at least accompanies the press with the bounty; and though it forces them to fight, both feeds and rewards them for fighting. The French people, therefore, are doubtless happier since the Revolution than ever they were before it, for this plain reason, that they eat and drink, and their health and spirits encrease with their republicanism. They do not, indeed, perceive, that the banquet cannot last at which all sit down; they do not read the writing on the wall, nor behold the ghost of "Famine scowling at the feast;" but "*plus sapit populus,*" says Lactantius, I think, in his *Treatise*

tise *De Divina Sapiaentia*, “ *quia tantum quantum opus est sapit*; but whether he has said so, or I have dreamed it, I am equally convinced, that the French nation, in contradiction to the pusillanimous Manifesto of our own, is attached, and firmly attached by these powerful, these natural ties to the new form of its Government; and *this*, in spite of the new principles of *requisition and nationality*, which have hitherto defeated the calculations of Statesmen, and the confederations of Courts.

I shall now, Sir, if you will pardon me, for employing so much of your leisure, take some slight notice of the Jacobins, of whom I shall venture to speak in terms, rather unusual in this country, and very different from all that just horror, and that vulgar abuse which have been so industriously excited and directed against them. The Jacobins have committed no crimes that I know of, which have not been participated and avowed by the nation: even in all the series of emigrations, if I except the very first of all, and afterwards that of the priests, I can discover no emigrations but emigrations of Jacobins. The Feuillans, Monarchists, Constitutionallists, Ministerialists, Moderates, by whatever name they have been celebrated for a moment, what are they but Jacobins? Were the Jacobins less Jacobins when they were presided by Brissot than by Marat? Is Mirabeau less a Jacobin, that now his bones are turned out of the Pantheon? The fact is, every man while he moves on
with

with the stream is Jacobin, and when he thinks of stopping his career, or of breasting the flood, he becomes Constitutionalist, or fœderalist, or something else, no matter what, the name of which is a passport to the guillotine. The Jacobins are neither more nor less than the French nation, with the exception of some of the nobles and the majority of the priests, and though by their superior abilities and courage, some of them have been able to assume great power, and to obtain a very high ascendancy in the public councils, it is clear that they have accomplished these objects of their ambition, by complying with the unjust and interested desires of the people, not by forcing or tyrannizing their will, and that no crimes have been committed that were not popular, and demanded by the nation. Nothing can therefore be so absurd, so mean, so pitiful, as to endeavour to represent them, as a particular and insulated faction, who have usurped the powers of government, and still retain them in spite of the wishes of the nation, in favour of Lewis the seventeenth; this mistake cost Monsieur de Lessart his life, and five months imprisonment, disgraced the Prince of Kaunitz, * for whose dotage

* It is but justice to the Prince of Kaunitz, to distinguish his *office* from our own manifesto; his was absurd, but it was not indecent. In March 1792 the Constitution prevailed, and the Jacobins or republicans were as much a faction as a great majority of any country is capable of being. In November 1793, the republicans were the constituted authorities of the state, and the British Ministry renewed the absurdity of M. de Kaunitz, with an impudence entirely its own.

it passed, I believe very unjustly, in the eyes of Europe, (for I can scarce hesitate to think his famous dispatch was a mere *charte blanche*, filled up by the Austrian Committee in the Thuilleries) and it is now again reproduced, with no better omens, in the manifesto of the Court of St. James's.

It is certain, however, that the Jacobins of to day; are of a deeper stain than the Baillys and Fayettees who have faded off the canvass of revolutions; even Brissot and Condorcet, that cold calculator of useful villainy, pretended to some degree of humanity, when forced to oppose the Marats and Dantons; and it is now very easy to observe the young ambition of Hebert and Chaumette, goading and pricking the jaded cruelty of the Robespierres and Barreres; these men however will probably reign a little longer, and whenever they cease to reign, it will not be, because their usurpation is discovered or their yoke uneasy, but because they have not advanced in Jacobinism as fast as the current of the nation, but suffered themselves to be surpassed by men still bolder and more remorseless than themselves. Were Brissot, or any of the twenty deputies who suffered with him monarchists? No: Was Charlotte Cordé a royalist? No: this assassin was as Jacobin as Marat himself; she was a republican, and she was converted to the doctrine of the lawfulness of useful crimes. Clement, Ravailac, would have been such republicans had they existed in our age or had republicanisin been substituted

tuted to religion in their own. It is extraordinary that La Vendée with all its superstition, (for it is really superstitious and priest-ridden) has not produced a single saint of this order, while infidelity seems to be so fertile in enthusiasts and martyrs. Where are the signs of royalism to be found in France? At Toulon? Surely not, for it is that very Constitution they declared for, which has been found incapable of protecting royalty, and of which the republic is the true and lineal descendant. But this they never dreamed of, till having failed in their plots of fœderalism, and frightened by the punishment of their accomplices at Marseilles, and the flight of the Girondists, they saw no hope of escaping punishment, but by calling in the combined squadron, upon almost any terms, to their protection. All the deputies expired invoking the duration of the republic.—But is it in La Vendée? Alas! It had taken refuge here with persecuted faith; and here they both lie buried in one undistinguished heap of cinders, a monument of the power and of the implacable ferocity of their persecutors.

There is only one sense in which I can consent to consider the Jacobins as distinct from the nation at large, and that is as the leaders or Ministers of the nation; in that sense, I think, they would have the advantage in comparison, over those ministerial factions which prevail in Courts, and administer so frequently the affairs, in contradiction to the wishes

of nations; and to consider them in this the worst point of view, I imagine they will not be found to be contemptible, since they have hitherto fairly beat and outwitted every Court and Cabinet in Europe, in the use of fraud, bribery, and persecution, those chief instruments of our modern governments, and directed the force of their unhinged and disjointed state, with a degree of vigour, ability, and success, that ought to extort blushes from other Ministers, who are at least as far removed from resembling them in their talents as in their crimes.—They are men, to use the words of one of our poets,

*Fit to disturb the peace of all mankind,
And rule it when 'tis wildest.*

The Prince of Kaunitz-Ritzberg in March 1792, complained in the name of his sovereign, of the Jacobins, whom he called a *cabal*, and accused of forming “*imperium in imperio* ;” he even insinuated that while the Jacobins remained, the Emperor would not see any security in treating with the Constitutional King. What was the consequence? Did the majority of the people rise and shake off the yoke of this pretended cabal, or did they adhere to the Jacobins to whom the imperial Philippic had lent fresh importance and consideration? The decree of accusation against the Minister followed instantly, and the 20th of June, and the 10th of August were but corollaries to the problem which had been solved with so much

F indiscretion.

indiscretion. How long will Ministers continue only to imitate the faults and blunders of each other, determined to profit by no experience, and incapable to act with common prudence and precaution? When they declare from authority that the great majority of France is anti-republican, do they recollect that what they announce with so much triumph and exultation at London, is either a lye or an accusation at Paris? And that in either case it strengthens the hands of these very Jacobins, who will convert it either into a cause or pretext for fresh extortions, and new requisitions, and make an engine of it to revive the weary fanaticism of the country, by fresh abjurations and new invented oaths? Or do they calculate merely for the meridian of London, and consider a three-weeks delusion as victory and success, though they expose by it their own weakness, unpopularity, and despair to these very Jacobins, whom they would be thought to detest and despise?

Now, Sir, since I am engaged upon the subject of the Jacobins, and of the nation which they rule, and having, I hope, declared my sentiments of the means by which they rule, in terms which cannot be mistaken, though I fear they will not be imitated by his Majesty's servants, give me leave to say thus much of those detestable principles, which it is thought more loyal to abuse, than to foresee any danger from the arms by which they are supported, and which it is become a kind of ton and fashion to reject,

ject, not because they are wicked or destructive, but because they are ungentle and uncourtly; I say, give me leave to express myself thus plainly with regard even to these principles, for even these ought not to banish from our minds all remembrance of former oppressions, which have so plentifully flowed from that great reservoir and fountain-head of human misery, the Court. I think, Sir, and were I to be banished for saying it, I would confess I thought it, that the crimes of France-free are too much detested, if they make the crimes of France-enslaved, either regretted, or pardoned, or forgotten.

I know not whether the earth presents not as fair a prospect to the cope of heaven, and to the eye of pure philosophy, overrun by the Tartar liberty that roves and ravages her untillaged bosom, as when dejected, chained, and drowsy, she seems a frozen footstool for the Sultan Power! A horde of tented Arabs on the free banks of the Tanais, is a nobler spectacle of human society than a Constantinople or a Vienna of cowed or turbaned slaves. The cataract that tears the rooted oak, or sweeps away the village, when its first violence is spent, descends with gentler influence, supplies the rivulet, nurses the vegetable herb, and grain, and vivifies the face of nature! But the stagnant pool that sleeps and stinks, where every rank weed *rots* and *rises* to the surface, poisons the very air, excludes the beams of heaven, and makes no reparation to the polluted earth.—Courts, Courts!

Now,

Now, Sir, having said so much, as I have no doubt it will be represented, in *defence* of the crimes of the Jacobins, give me leave to say something in extenuation, at least, of the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers; in truth I have some doubt whether what I have to offer for them will entitle any hunter of comparisons to draw an analogy between these pages and the fabulous spear, which healed, we are told, with one end as fast as it wounded with the other! But I have not much fear of being taken a second time for their partizan; and I owe it to justice to say what I know in their excuse. Ministers, I am aware, are too frequently but instruments and utensils in other hands. They obey too often where they appear to command, and follow only what others imagine and devise for them. The *Court*, the *Court*, the wealth, the patronage, the corruption of the Court, is the parent cause of all our wrongs and all our sorrows! Ministers are but the *instrumenta Delin*; though I will not take upon me to say of what deities they are the instruments, nor rake the peaceful rubbish of mythology for the capricious or malicious gods that could employ or protect such instruments. Could I but remove the veil that dims your mortal sight, as Venus did from her son's, you would no longer rage and fret, and meditate revenge against poor Helen; you would behold the golden trident that overturns our foundations; you would shudder at the cruel Juno, that sits upon our gate, and calls in the host of crimes and vices that consume and destroy our Ilium! While
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this dreadful source of every mischief remains undammed, undrained, in the midst of us; while these waters of bitterness and corruption are permitted to flow, with no dyke, no lock to restrain them; while by ten thousand pipes and conduits they disperse their poisonous streams to every field and every little garden, to every plant, and flower, and tree, from the heel-root to the extremest leaf, it will be vain to look for wholesome fruit upon our blighted branches, or noble timbers from our diseased and enfeebled pith.

If Parliaments have ever been deceived, or corrupted, or over-awed by Ministers, which I think no one can be found to deny, have not Ministers been as frequently corrupted, and deceived, and intimidated by Courts? But this Ministers will be careful how they own, because they feel more shame in confessing their despotism than their servility, and less security in avowing their weakness than their crimes. Are not Courts then become too powerful for Ministers, as well as too burthensome for the people? And would not Ministers gain as much in the independency and the dignity of their situation, by the reformation of Courts, as the people would recover in the reduction of taxes, and the return of morality!

There are two duties, of peculiar magnitude and importance, incumbent upon Ministers at the actual conjuncture of affairs; the one is to reform, and the other to defend us. I will not debate their priority; but what I will resolutely and eternally deny is their

incompatibility: The foreign war menaces every rank and order of men, from the palace to the farm; and it does so, not because the greater part of France is disposed to declare for Lewis the XVIIth. but because, excepting a few partial insurrections, not always in his favour, the totality of France is converted to those theories of atheism, “nationality,” and plunder, which it calls philosophy, patriotism, and equality; not because France desires the restoration of monarchy, but because she is ready to emigrate with her armies, and to over-run the earth with her principles and her pikes; not because she is anti-republican, but because she is not only republican, but, in spite of the first real constitution she has ever possessed, she remains revolutionary, and threatens with revolution!—This is the reason why, notwithstanding our apparent superiority, notwithstanding our vain, but ineffectual parade of force, which we display, like some gorged or paralytic giant, without skill, activity, or prudence, and without, I fear, any omen or favour from above; I say this is the reason why we are in so much danger from the foreign war; for I am not afraid to say, that whoever pretends to yield implicit credit to the Manifesto of the Minister, “*dedit latus apertum,*” and cannot defend himself against the arguments for peace. Now, the reform, I mean if no innovation or speculation is included in it, Sir, menaces nothing that I know of, unless it be the Court; and it promises a thousand blessings, not only to the farm but even to the cottage;

and accordingly we may observe, without pretending to any great degree of perspicacity, how popular it is in the country, how unpopular at St. James's !

We ought, no doubt, in candour, to allow for the feelings of the Minister, who must have found himself in an awkward and unpleasant predicament, because no man had contributed more to expose and revile the corruption of Parliament, nor animated in so great a degree the resentments of the people : The coarse libels of Mr. Paine had disturbed the sleep of the ignorant, but the eloquent appeals of Mr. Pitt had convinced the wise, alarmed the timid, and determined the energetic and the free : He had raised a spirit in the country, and the spirit he had raised had served him with zeal and with affection ; it had laboured for his interests, and used its innocent magic in his service with fidelity and with success. It had conjured him into power, and had rivetted him there with an irresistible, but secret spell ; yet still, from time to time, it put him in mind of the liberty he had promised, and demanded the performance, after every labour, and at every turn ; but when he had fatigued, and dispirited, and disappointed his little *Ariel* so often, that it moped and sulked, and hung its wing, and disobeyed, or obeyed unwillingly, instead of the free elements to which he had promised to restore it, “ he wedged the delicate spirit in a rited oak,” and betook himself to that foul witch, who had so long usurped the island ; he formed

an accursed conspiracy with that detested *Sycorax* the Court, and prepared himself to act

“ *Her earthy and abhorred commands.*”

It will be curious, my dear Sir, to consider the language the Court must have held to the Minister upon this honourable and disinterested occasion. Perhaps might it have said, “ You may become a little unpopular, from undertaking my protection at this time, and defending all my avarice and prodigality, all my meanness and oppression ; but it is not my custom to receive or offer friendship empty-handed ; I have something to confer, as well as to obtain : The reform is my enemy, the war is your danger ; now as long as you will protect me from reform, I will grant you a perfect liberty to conduct the war after your own fashion, with any degree of profusion, intrigue, negligence, or absurdity, that you may judge expedient or necessary ; my troops are ready, not only to defend every crime or error you can possibly commit, but to persecute whoever shall dare to accuse you.” Now, Sir, would it not be lamentable, if such conditions had been accepted, if such a treaty had been executed, if a great and generous nation had been made the victim, if liberty and virtue were the forfeit of a Statesman’s cowardice and a courtier’s cupidity ? What think you would have been the answer of Clarendon, or his Southampton, to this vile and court-like proposition ? I will not attempt to express the scorn, nor paint the proud and virtuous indignation,

nor

nor that elated forehead with which they would have rejected these "*dona nocentium.*" "I will hasten the reform of abuses," would either of them have said, "not only because it is honest, but because it is expedient: I will satisfy the just cries of the nation, not only that it may be more happy, but that it may be stronger; more able, as well as more willing, to support the burthens, and overcome the calamities of the war: I will reduce the Court and the Civil-List, which are unnecessary and inexcusable evils, that the country may the better sustain the war, which is an evil inevitable and irremediable; if there are grievances in the Government, if the Constitution is impaired, I will redress those and restore this, without a moment's delay, that the people may have the full benefit, and perceive the perfect excellence of that system, in the defence of which I am so soon to call for its treasure and its blood; and that I may be able to oppose the enemies of that Government, and of that Constitution, with the united sentiment and the united strength of the whole kingdom. And as for you," would he perhaps have continued, "for you, whose vice and avarice absorb these resources which might be carried to the war, who are the cause of all the miseries and all the murmurs of the people, who presume to offer impunity, instead of deprecating your own punishment, and to forgive uncertain to be pardoned, know, I desire not the protection that you can grant!—If I am mistaken, if I am unfortunate, I will retire, because it is my duty neither to persevere in error

nor in misfortune ; but if I am guilty, from what penalty can you shelter me ? From the laws ; by what means ? By intrigue and corruption :—But can you hide me from myself ; can you exclude the reproaches of my own mind ; can you shut out conscience, the judgment of the Public, the dread of that of posterity ? Alas, banishment and death itself are but a form of words, compared with the verdict of our own minds, with the sentence of the great jury of all our race !”

Such, I think, would have been, Sir, at least not very unlike to it, the language of the only Minister I know of, who never dwindled into a courtier, whose affinity to a King never corrupted his heart, whom neither power nor adversity elated or depressed ; equal and just in every turn of fortune, and great alike, whether persecuted by an ungrateful Prince and a deluded people, or moderating between their lavish zeal and his unprincipled ambition ; in every stage and character of life a generous and exalted personage, whose memory will be dear to Englishmen, as long as they have histories to read, and it shall be permitted to read them.

*Jamais l'air de la cour, & son souffle infecté
N'altéra de son cœur l'austère pureté.*

Would Clarendon, do you think, Sir, instead of preparing to acquit himself of both these honourable duties,

duties, have abandoned this as the price of that, and bought the despicable privilege of performing one *ill*, by the sacrifice or desertion of the other? Would he have allied himself to a base and rotten cause, for the sake of being obliged to use less energy or wisdom in a sound and perfect one, or of being able to cover a blot in the game by dissembling the value of the stake? Would Southampton have left that manly and tender panegyric upon his friend, which it is impossible to read without emotions of tenderness, and sentiments of gratitude and veneration, if he had not thought him able to reject the overtures, and repulse the impudence of courtiers, with all the dignity, and all the scorn, with which he was used to resist the arts and importunities of other favourites, no doubt as virtuous, and as respectable as these?

I think, Sir, I shall not, after what has been said, though to speak truth, I have not ventured to say it with all the precision and perspicuity of which it is susceptible, (but you will easily supply that deficiency, and pardon any other) I think that I shall not, after what has been said, even as it has been said, incur much danger of being treated as paradoxical, if I should venture to assert that courts are not only grown too powerful for Ministers, but that none would gain more by their reduction than Ministers themselves, provided they designed to govern by just, by honourable, or even by popular courses.

You

You have been pleased to express your approbation of those parts of my former letters, which related to the duties and conduct of their chiefs, and the composition and management of minorities: may they make the same impression upon the public mind, and upon the mind of those who are more immediately interested in judging these things right, and in acting according to a right judgment of them. They may prevent (I think it is yet time) many a violent convulsion, perhaps many a desperate wound to our happy and glorious Constitution. Give me leave at present to present you with a few thoughts that have occurred to me upon the situation, duty, and relative interests of Ministers and Courts. They will not, I fear, be so pleasing as the others; I cannot contemplate the subject with equal delight: my own observation of them, and the disgust with which all history and experience have inspired me towards them, have made the contemplation of them painful to my mind: and I can dwell no longer upon the subject, than I think necessary to the object of my letter, and necessary or useful to be understood clearly by the public.

We have some few years back, you will remember, heard it canvassed with great earnestness, and decided, I think, with more heat, exultation, and triumph, than with either candour, deliberation, or justice, that *the Minister* is the Minister of the Crown. If ever you, Sir, should, fortunately for your country, attain
that

that dangerous eminence, I think I know you will feel yourself the Minister of the People. You will never remain in power, if you cannot use it for the benefit of the people. You will advise the King, and you will execute the King's pleasure, and you will carry his councils into effect, as long as you think them useful and honourable for your country; and when you cannot serve him upon these terms, you will know the post of honour is a private station; you will retire into your individual capacity; and you will watch with unceasing vigilance, and oppose, with all the force and energy of your character, the measures of those who will take your place upon other terms, and condescend to be the King's Ministers, in contra-distinction to being the Servants of the Public. Give me leave then to ask of you, whether when you had accepted that important post, to which the confidence, the esteem, and the respect of the people is so necessary, and so indispensable—unless you could consent to a servile and mechanical execution of the views and pleasure of the Court, whatever they might be, whether possessing, and desiring to possess, no power, nor permanence in power, but what this confidence would give you, and which must necessarily encrease every day, and keep pace with the services you rendered your country, and the gratitude with which it would repay them; I say, give me leave to ask you, whether you could entertain any desire that the people should continue aggrieved and oppressed under the enormous load of
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the Civil List, merely to subsidize a horde of mercenaries, in the pay and interest of the Court, not yours; nay, on the contrary, always intriguing to govern or to perplex you, and always ready to vote and to act against you, as soon as it is discovered you are more the people's friend, than the friend of those who suck the blood of the people? Now, Sir, were it to appear ever so problematical, or paradoxical, I confess I could have no scruple to assert, that by the abolition of this useless and destructive band of janissaries, every Minister, who was fit to be one, who loved his country, who respected parliaments, who desired the prosperity of the nation, or the duration and integrity of the constitution, would find himself more strongly, more firmly seated in power, and more independant too of every other power: he would find himself freed from a thousand intrigues, impertinences, and vexations; and above every thing, from that habitual cabal, that familiar fraud, falsehood and treachery, with which he is surrounded.

The party that belongs exclusively to the Crown, in either House of Parliament, is certainly not the party of the Minister, though, during the pleasure of the Crown, he may prompt its pliant voice, and command its prostituted suffrage! Let him hesitate or refuse to comply with the maxims or the command of the court, this party becomes instantly hostile and menacing; it enables the Crown to dictate to the Minister, and intimidates a mean or an interested Minister, (and we have now no Clarendons or Southamptons)

amptons) from resisting the dictates of the Crown. If these mercenaries were therefore reduced or reformed, the standing forces of the Court would indeed be diminished; but the Minister would gain in independence on the one hand, more than he could lose from his precarious and versatile majority on the other: he would, it is true, count fewer *mutes* in the House, and muster a smaller number of what are called *dead votes*; he would be less able to carry by violence, unwise or unpopular measures in Parliament; but neither would he be obliged, nor persuaded, nor intimidated into proposing them; he would be more free himself, as well as the House, and the Country; and the confidence of the Country, which he could not miss, would confer more real power upon him, than he derived from all the sycophants of the Court, and all the corruption of the House. The King too would be reduced to what he ought to be, the Chief Magistrate, not the Chief Politician of the kingdom; he would be stronger and firmer in that popularity, which he must gain to govern either well or happily, than he could be in any hurtful privilege which might derive to him from the decay, abuse, and rottenness of our Constitution, of choosing Ministers, or of carrying measures, with indifference, or in opposition to the sentiments of his people.

Now, Sir, let me ask of you, supposing there were really to be formed in this country, a national party,
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upon national principles; and supposing you were placed where you so well deserve to be placed, and where you will one day, I do not doubt, be called by the voice of all the wise, and all the virtuous of your country; whether you could hesitate to disband these odious troops, and to pour back into the lap of the people, that part of the Civil List at least, which is allotted to their pay? Could the Minister regret, or could the people regret the dispersion of these hirelings, who are the tyrants of Ministers, as well as the enemies and the famishers of the people? Could the dignity of the Crown be diminished, or compromised, by removing that profligate band, which alone could bring it into danger or discredit with the people—with the people, not sufficiently able to distinguish between the use and abuse of any institution, for example, between a Crown and a Court? But if Crowns undergo any great degree of danger in Europe from the convulsions of modern opinions, and the influence of new principles and systems of politics and philosophy, they have been brought into all their perils, and exposed to whatever hazard they appear to run, by Courts; because Courts are believed to be inseparable from Crowns, and corruption, prodigality, avarice, and venality, are known to be inseparable from Courts. But were the filth swept out of Courts, and were Crowns lightened and relieved from that mass of meanness, of vice and immorality, which rots or ferments around them; were the taxes levied upon the sweat of the people to

nourish

nourish, and to pamper these useless drones, or rather poisonous wasps, that rob and sting society, were these taxes remitted to it, were the odious and insupportable object removed, at least further out of sight, or even reduced to a small part of its present volume, not only would Governments be more secure, but Kings would have nothing to dread, either for themselves or their succession. It is their *Courts* which create the danger; it is Courts which are to be defended, and not Crowns; but, unfortunately, Courts have the means of abusing the weakness of Crowns; and if Crowns will enlist in the cause of Courts, there is no doubt they must abide by the fate of the garri-son.

If Kings did but perceive how much their pomp and pageantry, their style and ceremony, in one word, their *Court*, has cost them in the genuine love, in the simplicity of their people's affection, how far aloof it keeps from them the wise, the modest, and the virtuous; how it alienates the just, the generous, and the free; what envy and contempt it breeds, what discontent and indignation it nourishes, they would discover one great source of the republican spirit, which seems to menace the thrones of Europe, and they would hasten instinctively, as it is pretended of that harmless animal which is hunted for its perfume, to separate themselves from that swollen and foetid bladder, which supplies neither force, nor vigour, nor enjoyment, but retards and delays their

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flight, and betrays them to the pursuer by the rankness, as much as it invites by the riches it contains.

But there are some gentlemen (disinterested no doubt) who are extremely apprehensive lest the dignity of the Crown should be impaired or diminished by the sweeping of Courts; it seems to be their opinion, that if some of the ceremonial offices were abolished, if pensions were limited, and sinecures destroyed, the Sovereign would be absolutely deserted and neglected by the nobility and gentlemen, by the learned and virtuous of England! Such an opinion is at least a libel upon a loyal and noble nation, who will crowd around their King to do him honour or service, and cover the Throne with their generous bodies, as often as it shall be exposed to danger or contempt, and after this mean and mercenary crew shall have fled and deserted, and stopped its allegiance with the stoppage of its pay! It is only, besides, in times of ignorance, and consequently of fear, that state and ceremony can impose to any great political purpose upon the people; knowledge, happily for mankind, as it spreads amongst men, equalizes them by rapid, but imperceptible degrees; and shew and form lose much of their charms and prestiges, in proportion as a real understanding prevails amongst men; Courts, when viewed from afar, may resemble those statues of Phidias, which presented to the distant eye, we are told, the
gigantic

gigantic forms of Jove or Neptune, all smooth and glossy bright, shining with polished ivory and gold; but if you approached, and examined them within, you beheld the cranks, and nails, and screws and cements, the mortar, and rubbish, the *πολλήν αμόρφιαν*, of their construction. Now, unfortunately for Courts, all this *αμόρφια* is glaring to the eye, and few stand at so great a distance from the Colossus, as to perceive the symmetry of its form, and not to perceive the filth and ugliness of its composition. But let those who think so meanly of monarchs, and of nations too, as to imagine, that the virtues of the first could not obtain the respect and affection of the latter, without the aid of salaries and bribes: who think the wealth of the Civil List is necessary to subsidize the venal loyalty of Britons, and would corrupt us into virtue and allegiance, let these doughty champions for Courts produce the Monarch of Europe who enjoys a state or splendor, though purchased with the sweat and tears of millions, so calculated to dazzle the eye and win the hearts of their people, as the mild and faintly lustre that beams around the brows of Washington; the parental dignity, the *pia auctoritas*, that distinguish and defend the first citizen of America!

Those too who would trace the kingly government to early or to divine origin, might do well to remember, that their favourite prototype is *a King without a Court*. Indeed, what a King should be, and what he might have been, in the infancy and innocence of

society, before craft and artifice, the worst vices of the heart, were taken to be the excellence and perfection of the understanding,—a father in the bosom of his family :—Where have they read of his Ministers and Chamberlains, of his Grooms of the Bedchamber, Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, Lords of the Bedchamber ? Of his Pages, his Masters of the Ceremony, and that endless chain of pride, extravagance, and folly, which is politically, morally, and physically, a curse upon the country ? Had Abraham, had Abimelech, Stewards of the Household, Masters of the Horse ? Of the Hawks, of the Hounds ? What were the sinecures in an Arabian tent, or the contracts for a progress from Kadek to Gerar ? How unfortunate that we have no memoirs of their great officers of state ; probably they bore as perfect a resemblance to our own courtiers, as the best of our Kings has done to the worst of the patriarchs.

Every form of Government, whatever be its peculiar excellence, has also some correspondent defect, some propensity and bias to its fall. The violence and injustice of popular judgments, are, I think, the immediate cause of the ruin of democracies. Excessive inequality of wealth, the accumulation of offices and honours, and their becoming hereditary, are the paths by which aristocratical institutions arrive at the tyranny of a few or of one. But Courts are the peculiar vice and cordial rottenness of monarchies ; they corrupt and are corrupted ; they are oppressed, and they oppress ; their best virtues are the virtues of slaves ;

slaves; fervile duties, personal attentions, and fidelity; but their vices are the worst that slaves can own; for besides lying, flattering, and cringing, to whatever is above, they are necessarily callous and cruel to all that is beneath them. The jealousy of the eunuch is greater than the husband's; the tyranny of courtiers more intense than that of the Sultan: They are enemies to liberty, because they have sold their own; and to virtue, because it ceases not to upbraid them with the barter.

Courts too, beside their profligate character, so destructive of the national morals, are politically mischievous, and full of danger, since they have assumed and usurped to be an intermediate body between the several branches of the public authority. They are interposed between Kings and their people, they damp the affectionate loyalty of their approach, and convert their honest love into a distant awe, a forced and cold respect; and, on the other hand, by the forms, the delays, and the difficulty of his access, they obstruct and impair the parental feelings of the Prince in their way to the people. They become the channel of every grace and favour; even the godlike prerogative of mercy flows through polluted streams, and crimes unpunished, are the price of the caresses of a prostitute, or the importunity of a liveried companion. But those persons who are so anxious for the dignity of the Crown, will tell us again, that these bands of courtiers are necessary to

its support. Can any man seriously think, Sir, that the loyalty and affection of the nation are encreased by passing through such channels as a Lord of the Bedchamber, or a Chamberlain of the Household?

*Purior in vicis aqua tendit rumpere plumbum,
Quam quæ per pronum trepidat cum murmure rivum.*

Do the loyalty and affection of the people flow purer through these leaden conduits, that communicate its wishes, or its complaints, to the dull and distant ear of royalty; does the customary transfer of a subject's petition to the tender feelings, or conscientious policy, of a Lord Chamberlain, encrease the gratitude or the attachment of the suitor? Or do even the Lords with white staves transmit the gracious pleasure of the Prince with more amenity, or with encreased benevolence to his dutiful subjects, the co-estates of the realm?

And of what service, let me ask you, could a Prince, and a Prince that should be a statesman, or a politician at least; of what service could he think it to himself, or to his situation, to have the sense of every favour he bestows, the gratitude for every gift he dispenses, diverted from his own person to an office or an individual?

O fortunatos Reges sua si bona norint!

With the power they have to oblige, with the facility they enjoy to engage affection ; with the prerogative they possess of granting honours, favours, pardons, and exemptions, to be less beloved, less popular, than their own servants ! Can the Prince be made to believe, that it promotes his service, or attaches men to his person or his cause, that the chief of a party, or his dependants, should nominate to offices, should fill up vacancies, and that all the hope and all the gratitude of the nation should be withdrawn from himself, to crowd the train of some Neckar or Sejanus ?—Can he be ignorant of the cypher he becomes at his own levee, where every vow is secretly addressed to his own satrapes and officers, and himself remains at best but the mandarin with the longest nails, too remote from affection, too stately even to be feared. Alas ! why does it appear inseparable from royalty, to seek to remove itself to an unmeasurable distance, to plant an hostile and impassable barrier between itself and the people ?—The people who give it, sweat for it, bleed for it ?

There is yet another point of view, in which it may be expedient, at some fitter opportunity, to consider the Court ; namely, as the capital of the great pillar of aristocracy. At the present, I shall content myself with submitting to you, Sir, whether it were not more wise, more natural, and more fortunate, if the *political order of nobility* appeared to possess more intrinsic dignity of its own, a higher sense of its ex-

alted privilege and independent station, with somewhat less of eagerness and anxiety for the smiles and favours of St. James's? Whether that body, which is intended by the Constitution to be a check and controul upon the Crown, as well as the House of Commons, might not enjoy its great prerogative in more security, and acquit itself of its illustrious duties with more effect and authority, if it were too proud to divide the infamous bounty of the Court, upon the one hand, and too honest to seduce the frail integrity of an indigent elector on the other? If it scorned to shine with borrowed rays, and revolve in an orbit not its own, a cold and servile moon to a mightier planet, whose course it ought to regulate, and incline by its own volume and attraction?

“*Repetenda est,*” says Cicero, speaking of the noble order of his own countrymen, “*repetenda est vetus illa severitas, siquidem auctoritas senatus, decus, honestatem, laudem desiderat, quibus hic ordo caruit nimium diu.*” And it cannot have been said with more truth of the Roman, than it might be said of the British Senate; for the corruption of both has derived from the same source; and the reigns, if I may so call them, of Sylla and Pompey, by setting up the protection and favour of a Court as an object of ambition, and sometimes of security, had only done that, which has been accomplished, in a greater degree, by the longer operation of the
same

same causes in Britain. It had withdrawn the Senate from the proud contemplation of its own independence and dignity, and delivered over the Senator to speculations of individual greatness and advantage, from a corrupt compliance with the views, and a corrupt hope from the gratitude of the Executive Power.—In England, I am sure, one good consequence would have been felt at this time, if the laws of our political system had not been violated by the magnetism of which I have complained: The *Political Nobility* would not have been confused and amalgamated with the *Court Nobility*; and the aristocracy of Parliament would not have been debased and depreciated by that impure alloy of the aristocracy of the Palace; the nobles of the nation would not have been presided by the *Liberti* and *Libertini*, the freedmen and parvenus of the household: The names and virtues that are dear to the country, the Osbornes and the Ruffels, the Bentincks and the Cavendishes; would not be eclipsed by the sudden elevation and splendour of some ennobled (not emancipated) slave, whose enormous wealth, and resistless favour seem designed for no other use nor object, but to shew a repining people the caprice of his fortune, and the cruelty of its own!

While the *Æmilii* and *Camilli* were distinguished only by the dangerous popularity of a race dear to the Romans: Pallas, Callisthus, Nymphidius, whose new honours had eternally dishonoured the senate of Rome,

Rome, and whose names I blush to remember, were tyrannizing and corrupting the empire.

Much, Sir, has been said of late against this order of the State, and it has never been so well defended as it might have been; and this, I think, for want of making the distinction I have just pointed to you. *Nobility* is the blood of those who have saved or died for their country: there is an eternal aristocracy in the gratitude of nations to the posterity of patriots and heroes, and in these an eternal obligation to emulate the deeds and virtues which have endeared their names to their country. This is the true and solid base, the foundation and corner-stone of genuine Nobility; and it will resist the wild and senseless efforts of popular malice and captious philosophy: if it be not betrayed and undermined by the spurious nobility of Courts; by the contempt and odium inseparable from a profligate or venal distribution of honours. The prince who ennobled his prostitutes, and he who should openly bestow the peerage at the *recommendation* of his Finance-Minister, infringed, or would infringe, the first and fundamental privilege of that House of Parliament, and give a deeper stab to the political aristocracy, than a thousand Mirabeaus and Syezes could ever have inflicted.

One word more upon this important topic, which I find it difficult to relinquish, and upon which I repress myself almost in vain; we have seen with general

neral satisfaction, even in these times, the high spirit of our real nobility disdain the charm of office, and all the bribes of power, when this vulgar greatness could be retained no longer without sacrifices of honour : at the same time that we beheld, with sensations which no language that I am master of can describe, our artificial Lords, the *Court Nobility*, succeed to the vacancy, or remain in their offices, chaunting the palinody of their own declarations, signing the retractions of their own counsels, without feeling humiliation, or confessing shame.

But it were unreasonable, perhaps it is unjust, to expect such sacrifices from such men ! Alas ! how should they think of retirement ! Their woods are not ready to conceal them ! It is surely but good-nature to give time to the trees and the builders, before we send in the family ; and it would be cruel to divert from their young plantations the streams that flow four times a year ; enriched with prolific slime from the Treasury !

Seriously, Sir, we ought not to exact efforts of virtue, or of courage, foreign to the principles and habits of men. To be happy in seclusion, we must bear along with us the regrets at least of others, and our own applause. Retirement without repose, and solitude without a contented memory, are but vain opiates, full of disturbed and restless dreams, and do
but

but irritate the fever of the soul by forced and violent abstractions.

And when I speak of retirement, it is necessary to remember, that to the wise and virtuous, it brings society, domestic joys, the offices of friendship, and the testimonies of esteem, with all the *jucunda oblivia* of a busy life; but to disappointed vanity, and discarded meanness, it presents a desert, a wide and dreary void. The shade is dark and gloomy which no reflection cheers, no horizontal beam enlivens in the crimson evening of life's *dusty* day. The palm obtained without a single public or private virtue, sheds neither peace nor honour over the purchased palace. Forgive me, but when I think of the latter end of these dupes, I will not call them favourites of fortune, and of their vows conceded by malignant deities, I cannot refrain from reminding you of a wiser and a nobler prayer, and the wish of one who had been truly great, if he had never been condemned to be a Courtier.

*Sic cum transierint mei
 Nullo cum strepitu dies
 Plebeius moriar senex!
 Illi mors gravis incubat
 Qui notus nimis omnibus
 Ignotus moritur sibi!*

To these beautiful and well-known lines, permit me to add one brief reflection, which does not seem to have

have occurred to Seneca, and which I should be sorry should escape your observation. There are men so different from him, and they are not *plebeii senes*, but have grown old and noble *cum strepitu* and *cum pulvere*, in dirt and noise, that solitude is therefore terrible to them, because it will not permit them to die unknown to themselves, but stops them on the brink of death to form this late and painful acquaintance, and compels them to concur before they part in the sentiments of all their contemporaries !

It is not my intention to exhaust this endless subject upon the present occasion ; I have only skimmed the surface with a light and rapid hand. It certainly seems to me important at the present conjuncture, to direct the public attention towards the Court, and to open the eyes of the public and of the Court itself, with respect to their relative situation and interest ; but it is enough to present the nuisance to the moral grand jury of the nation, and to destroy the false opinion, that the Court is any part of the Constitution of Great Britain ; certainly it is neither a vital nor an integral part of it. It appears to me, I confess, to grow a fungus out of the decay and rottenness of other institutions, and to be a foul and ugly wen, or rather a rank and dangerous cancer upon the body politic. Let it look to itself ! It is time when the eyes of the country are turned towards it. No man can detest more than myself, as you well know, Sir, the operations of state-surgery ; but it is proper that
this

this wen should learn, that if will not take physic, and reduce itself, the knife may be applied with perfect security to the Constitution.

I will now go one step further; and I will tell you (though these are times which require circumspection, and we poor hares cannot make ourselves quite sure that our ears may not be taken for horns) that the people desire, and must have reform. The truths of Mr. Paine have been more confounded with his treasons, by the arts of interested governments, and the chicanery of impudent lawyers, than his treasons have been with his truths, by the plain sense and sincerity of the people. The first effect of his publications was alarming; the suddenness with which certain truths were let in upon the eye, both dazzled and confounded. The insidioufness with which abstract and impossible perfection was held up to view, was itself dangerous, as light is to those who have long been immured in darkness; and the hatred and contempt of all governments, so industriously inspired, and so plausibly defended by the easy and sudden display of their enormous defects, abuses, and corruption, formed together a crisis, which providentially has not proved fatal to society. But it is not only Mr. Paine, and the abettors of such wild and fanciful doctrines, who have polluted and poisoned the public mind; other writings have been poured profusely into the world, and distributed with equal industry and perseverance, in a cause, I think, not purer,

purser, nor more honest than Mr. Paine's! The danger is not indeed equal, because the sleep of despotism itself is preferable to the eternal convulsions of an organized anarchy, and a systematic state of revolution; but I doubt whether it be a nobler principle to corrupt into slavery, than to inflame to licentiousness; whether it be baser or wickeder to forge the pikes, than the chains of the people!

When the Court and the Ministry had made common cause, and agreed to resist and to calumniate every species of reform, it was politic perhaps to raise a cry, but I think it was unwise to declare a crusade against the reformers—The Court refused reformation because reformation was a Jacobin pretext, and such was the folly, or the insincerity, or the unutterable absurdity of some of those who cried the loudest for reform, that they confessed they considered the reform they demanded as a revolution in the government. *Inde mali labes*—From that time, the Court had a pretence, a weak one no doubt, and no doubt a wicked one, but where the ends were so virtuous and so honourable, it would have been a paltry and and superstitious scruple, to have enquired into the delicacy or the pureness of the means; the Court had pretext at least, of which it did not fail to avail itself, to decry every species of reform, and to confound every description of those who demanded it; to confound them at first with one another, and afterwards in a body with the Jacobins of Paris, as if it were

one and the same thing to desire greater virtue and integrity in the representative branch of our own Constitution, and to applaud the horrors that had desolated France; as if it were equivalent to murder and massacre, to desire some limits to corruption, and were become treason, or regicide itself, to pronounce the name of liberty, or to look back with wistfulness upon the brightest and purest annals of our own history! Oh memorable delusion! Oh incredible credulity! Oh matchless example of political craft and folly, of fraud and faction, of successful impudence and ambition!

Mr. Paine, however, is an enemy to every system and to every Constitution! *What then?* He has convinced men, who are aware of the treachery with which he writes, that there is much to be reformed, and something to be atoned for in our government; He has convinced men that reformation will not be more spontaneous from a House of Commons so constituted as ours; and that the sinecures distributed amongst the members of opposition, from an obstacle to the people's demands, as strong and insurmountable as if they were held by the partizans of the government itself; he has shewn that the support afforded to the existing abuses by Lord Grenville a Minister, and Lord Stormont a Peer in Opposition, is alike natural in both, since both are placemen; and that abuses must necessarily be perpetuated and increased under such a system of corruption as this is, which

which pervades every branch of the Government, and of the Opposition too: without pursuing the reasoning of Mr. Paine, which in whatever spirit it is written, is sometimes solid and convincing, I say convincing, for *fas est et ab hoste doceri*—and is most dangerous perhaps where it is the falsest and the most metaphysical; without pursuing Mr. Paine's reasoning any farther, and avoiding, as I do by design, to enumerate other instances which occur to me of sinecures held by rich and noble families, on both sides of both Houses of Parliament, because I think it unpleasant, or perhaps invidious to point out gentlemen who have so much to answer for, without being in responsible situations; I do not dissemble that it is my earnest wish, that there should be no secret in the whole kingdom with respect to those who are now secretly attached to the cause of corruption and abuses, by the salaries they draw from them. I think it hard at the same time upon Ministers themselves, that Peers, at least, will not defend their own privileges and exclusive greatness, without being hired to it like the underlings of the press or the treasury; and I pity the difficult and laborious services of Mr. Long and Mr. Rose, as much as I respect those talents for persuasion which cannot persuade a Peer to vote in his own cause, without giving him the bribe designed for a commoner, and I think it cruel too, that no cast nor individual will defend his own prerogative and interest, unless he be paid for it;—but though I think all these things, my

dear Sir, I shall leave a list and catalogue of sinecures and abuses, to be furnished by those who lament them less, and can bring themselves to contemplate our misery and depravity with calmer nerves and a more philosophical temper, than it is my lot to possess. It shall not however be wanting when occasion demands it; it will make a supplement, and furnish no uninteresting comment upon our *livre rouge*—Would the people of this enlightened country give credit to me were I to tell them, without demonstrative proofs, the enormous sums they annually pay, to buy themselves enemies, to bribe traitors against their own cause, to bind down powerful families in eternal hostility to their liberty, prosperity, and peace?

I am now going to ask you a question, which I doubt not you have already anticipated, though I suspect rather with apprehension than impatience. I am going to ask you, whether you can believe, for an instant, that any set of Ministers could deliberately continue and encrease all these abuses and dangers, which are so many insults besides, and a cruel mockery upon the understanding and distress of the country, unless they wished them to arrive at some fatal crisis, or expected some dangerous climacteric? Would any surgeon neglect or foment so foul a wound, unless he designed to bring the sore to a gangrene, and an amputation?

As to those who deny the necessity of reform, and pretend to be perfectly satisfied with the existing situation of government and the Constitution; I will just ask them, why in that case they do not provide for the security and permanence of a system they think so happy and so perfect? I will ask them, whether they can think any establishment secure, against which its enemies can bring such charges as have been brought by the enemies of our own? If corruption be necessary, as they pretend it is, (and who will deny that it is the necessary resource of Ministers who have neither wisdom, nor virtue, nor real honest popularity?) Can it be necessary too that it should stink in every nostril, and glare in every eye? Would it not be prudent to heap the dunghill on the other side of the hedge, where the school-boys could not find it out, and rake it to the annoyance and offence of every nerve in the neighbourhood? For my part, if I wished to continue this abominable and immoral system of bribery and burgage-tenure, I should be as eager to disfranchise Old Sarum and half the towns of Wilts and Cornwall, as those persons could be who wished honestly for a real and radical reform—and I confess seriously, that thinking as I do, I should be very sorry to see just so much done and no more; because I am convinced that every abuse and injury that has not become plain and palpable to the people, may be continued, and will be continued, with unfeelingness and with impunity, as long as the wealth and satellites of the Court, shall be able to corrupt or intimi-

date every Administration. It is here that every argument will return; it is here, that whoever would save his country from revolutions, the event of which no man is able to foresee; and whither men can be driven only by the violence of their passions, excited more by contempt and insult, than by the sense of habitual wrongs: It is here, I say, that every friend to England must look for, and must carry reform; without this, we can have no security for the freedom or independence of any Parliament: we can feel no hope of the integrity of any Minister, of the duration of any system, of the period of any evil.

The enormous power and preponderance of the Crown, the excess of salaries and pensions, the number of sinecures, and places without number, have united a formidable phalanx, more formidable from the ground they occupy, than from their skill, their courage, or their resources: All these will assemble to plant a barrier between the people and its wishes: But heaven forbid that an enlightened Prince should range himself on the side of a base and abandoned Court, against a patient, a loyal, and a virtuous people! But heaven forbid, that a patriot King should hesitate between a nation and the furniture of a drawing-room, or know a doubt between the millions he was born to bless, and the harpies who steal the viands from their lip; who steal the viands from their lip, and poison the scraps they leave, with their nauseous touch, and their corrupt effluvia.

The unexampled rigour of the courts of justice will, in my apprehension, produce but a very momentary effect, and that effect will be followed by a direct contrary impression. Far be it from me to enter into the defence of those who have been condemned by a verdict of their country; however it may be to be lamented, that the sentences pronounced upon them should have appeared so generally severe, as to have dismissed the audiences from our tribunals of justice with an enthusiasm very unlike to that which assembled them: In some places they seemed to feel themselves not simple spectators of a trial, but entrusted with the character of the Chorus at least in the antient drama; to have breathed their ardent vows to heaven.

Ut redeat miseris abeat fortuna superbis.

That they should have separated with sentiments like these could have been more properly considered as unfortunate, if it ought not to have foreseen and expected: the hardship of some trials, and the severity of some sentences, which I do not think it necessary to cite, have done more real mischief to Administration than any libels, or any treasons, which the objects of all this rigour were capable of writing or dispersing among the people. Eager prosecutions and excessive punishments against this species of crime are amongst the signs of the weakness, as well as the violence, of the fears, as well as the fury of Governments—the fever

that makes power mad, makes it tremble too; it shakes long with the fit, which made it strong and terrible for a moment:—Fear is constantly cruel, but the sense of security is naturally kind and forgiving. Julius Cæsar could pardon the lampoons of Catullus, but Asinius Pollio, or Cassius Chærea, I think it was one of these personages, and I cannot go to book for them, was forced to die for a compliment to the memory of Brutus, and his brother-in law.

There seems, indeed, to enter as much spleen and bile into the constitution of political as of natural bodies. Republicanism has frequently meant nothing but the hatred of monarchs: and I think that I could shew that in the states of Greece, and republican Rome, there prevailed more virulence and malice against kings, than love or understanding of liberty; this was, perhaps, the natural effect of the experience they had had of them; for how many have been fit to be entrusted with the conduct of their species? Flattery can go no further than to compare the best of them living with one or two, and to distinguish and contrast them from all the rest of their order—*Quomodo Augustus sic et Antoninus*—and History, which judges all men, has her cross to make against the very prototypes of perfection*. The great political secret was not yet discovered, that

* *Non fu si santo ni benigno Augusto,
Come la tromba di Virgilio suona.*

Kings might be tolerated even in republics, and Freedom, a Chæreatid nymph, submit her generous neck to the gentle burthen of a legal and limited throne : Androcles had not tamed his lion ; and Liberty, leading a muzzled monarch by her side, had been a bolder hieroglyphic than Œdipus and the Sphynx herself would have dared to decypher. Even now, how few states of Europe, administered under republican forms, have any just idea of liberty ! In Venice, where there is a direct, intense, and meridian political tyranny, the people exult, because they have no King ; even in Holland, what notion do they entertain of representation ?

We read but of one people, however, who have rejected liberty ; the Cappadocians, we are told by Strabo, as he is cited by Lord Bolingbroke, *Liber-
tatem, repudiaverunt ut quam sibi dicerent intolerabilem* ; I suspect, however, that this determination of the Cappodocians, in effect, was little more than a compliment to Rome, and regarded no part of their own political constitution, so much as the residence or absence of a legate or his assessor, (who might probably have possessed sufficient interest to procure so loyal an address) ; but of this I am confident, that freedom is intolerable to every vicious and corrupted people, whether they have the means of rejecting it or not, as we may contemplate it in France, where it is new ; and, I am confident, that it will be most intolerable to a corrupted people, where she has long been estab-

lished, as I hope we shall never be able to learn by an example still nearer home; for though in a depraved state, in which liberty is new, she may be violated and abused, she can scarce be made the bawd and pimp of despotism, or turned into a state-engine and pretext for oppression: but in a country which has long been free, but has ceased to be so, because of its corruption, she will easily become all these, and worse, if there is worse than these; the names, the forms, and even the memory of the antient freedom, will become not only decoys and snares, but crimes and treasons, wherever they are discovered; it is there that sighs will be registered, and regrets indicted, that thought will be dogged by danger, and silence haunted by suspicion: In such a state, the laws will not be abrogated nor forgotten, but they will be strained and perverted; a species of horrid mockery will be engrafted upon oppression, and the virgin be delivered to the hangman's lust, that she may pass *legally* to the torture or the scaffold.

In mixed Governments like our own, it is natural, perhaps it is unavoidable, that some of the citizens should incline with predilection and favour towards one branch of the Constitution, and regard the others with jealousy at the least: Amongst the subjects of such a state, there will be some who may mistake themselves into an exclusive loyalty and attachment to the regal branch, incompatible with the principles of free Governments, or the sentiments of free
Men;

Men ; while there will be others, whom an unmeasured love of liberty, and of the very forms of liberty, may induce to lament the lost republic, and to offer vows not very favourable to the monarchical part of the Government ; there may be persons too, amongst either or both of these descriptions, who may be but ill affected towards the aristocratic order, and averse to titles of nobility and hereditary distinctions, which have not, they may imagine, so much decorated and exalted the individuals who bear them, as they have debased and degraded the great mass of mankind, from which they have invidiously separated and divided them ; but none of those individuals, it is clear, can be perfectly contented with the abstract theory of our existing Constitution ; one will wish that in the distribution of powers, more weight had been thrown into this scale, while another will desire to give a preponderance to the opposite side of the balance : but bring these men together, and they instantly become contented, because they instantly perceive the necessity of mutual concession and adjustment. Three citizens, such as I have described, deputed to select a Constitution, must of necessity form one analogous to our own : *virtus est medium vitiorum & utrinque reducta*. Would it not therefore be tyrannical, unjust, and absurd, to punish any one of them for the eccentricity of his opinion, since the union of these opinions makes the very system which they all severally prefer to the system of each other, and which they all have made
their

equal sacrifices to obtain? Were the Tories perfectly satisfied at the Revolution, did the Whigs carry all their points? Was it not accomplished by reciprocal concessions, by mutual forbearance, by a compromise of political tenets and pretensions? Is it contended, that every individual of the state must be a bad subject, who conceives a greater degree of perfection to be possible in the Government, than he perceives actually to exist there, or a juster balance and distribution of powers than he believes is to be found in our Constitution? Alas, we are all guilty, Whigs and Tories, Court and country, every description and party of us are criminal before so severe a tribunal!

Give me leave to take this opportunity of expressing the regrets I feel, that the privilege of thought should be allowed of to a greater extent in our schools and universities than in the great forum and theatre of life. If we are to go on according to the maxims now adopted, and become popular in Courts and in Courts of Justice, I am fearful we are guilty of a fatal error, in teaching our children the republican languages of Italy and Greece, and in imbuing their minds with principles so likely to lead them to high treason as those of Tacitus, of Sallust, and Cicero, of Plutarch, Xenophon, and Socrates. I think it is Diogenes Laertius in his life of Antisthenes the philosopher, who has the following remarkable sentence,

Τον Σοφον ε καλά τες κειμενες Νομης πολιτευεσθαι, αλλα καλα τον της
 Αρελης, και ιρασθησισθαι δε : μονον γαρ ειδεναι τον Σοφον τινων χρη εραν.

I shall certainly not put this maxim into English, because I cannot approve of all the discretion and arbitrement it establishes in the breasts of learned men ; it authorizes them, no doubt to exercise their judgment, at least upon existing laws and constitutions, and more than to publish their opinions ; but still less can I applaud the axiom, that seems to prevail at present, and to make it treason or dishonour to suspect, that there might be compounded a better system of government, or invented a wiser code of laws than that by which we are guided ; though I am firmly convinced, that all who aim at this greater perfection, by any other means than by restoring them to the purity they once enjoyed, and bringing them back to the simplicity and virtue of their original institution, will find themselves miserably mistaken in the experiment. However, while this species of persecution prevails, and even when it shall have ceased, it might certainly be prudent to establish a greater degree of conformity between our laws and our education ; for surely, my dear Sir, it is seriously to be apprehended, that it is not for the happiness of the rising generation to be educated for freedom and virtue, nor to become enamoured and familiar with the great examples of free and virtuous antiquity, at this period, when not only *corrumpere* & *corrumpi* is the fashion of the age, but when there is so much danger and disgrace in resisting the torrents of fashion and corruption. Surely we do not
 only

only nurse their opening minds, “*nihil sanantibus literis,*” but with dangerous longings, and with fatal affections; we do not form them to be happy or contented citizens in such a state as ours, but bring them up rather to the pillory, to banishment and the scaffold;—will they not one day exclaim against us, nay, may we not ourselves already cry out against our predecessors, as Sir John Savile did, “Oh, improvident ancestors! Oh, unwise forefathers!” or may not even these sighs and regrets very soon become treasonable or seditious?

With regard, however, to the terrors inspired, or capable of being inspired, into a whole people, it is worthy of remark, that men are more easily astonished than they are frightened: though astonishment, particularly in political cases, is frequently mistaken for fear. But there is this important distinction between them, that though the impression is instantaneous in both, its duration is different and unequal....Astonishment is rarely, or perhaps never followed by fear; for the very sense of recovery from it is active and encouraging; men relieved from the weight of it, naturally turn to examine the object or the circumstance that caused it, and courage always arises from the minute examination even of real danger. But that torpor which you have observed in the people, has its source, according to my judgment, and according to my fears, in another, and a fatal cause, in its contempt and equal indifference towards both Ministers and Opposition;

in its despair of deriving any redress or remedy from either, and in the cool determination it seems to possess, to do itself that right which it thinks is impudently and unfeelingly denied to it on the one hand, and feebly and hypocritically demanded for it on the other. But if it does sleep, I would advise his Majesty's Servants to watch carefully and constantly over its slumbers; its waking will be terrible, whenever it happens; and any clath, in any part of Europe, may echo so strongly in its ears, as to occasion it to start up unexpected and sudden. They who are so well accustomed to rock the baby, should be ready to hush its cries when it wakes.

You know, my dear Sir, the apprehensions I have long entertained of this *waking*;—what I have already written will always be a proof of the anxiety I have entertained lest this Reform should be accomplished by other hands than those of Parliament: a Reform in any other way appears to me to differ in nothing from a Revolution: for if the power of the State exists for a moment in any other body than in the Houses of Parliament consenting with the Crown; it may exist there for a month, a year, for a century, or for ever. Firmly convinced in my own mind of the danger of this important crisis, to which we are made forcibly to approach by the ignorance, the obstinacy, or the design of his Majesty's Servants; by the corruption of the Court, and by the perverseness of a majority in the House of Commons: and still more
immediately

immediately by the absurd and criminal ill conduct of the war, which disgusts the people, more strongly, and more sensibly, than remote and habitual evils; and teaches them to despise Ministers, as well as to hate them, (the most dangerous of all situations). Convinced of this danger, and alarmed at the difficulty which every honest mind must experience, in chusing the part he will act, and even the side upon which he will range himself, I have felt it my duty, as a good citizen (I pretend to no other title) to make those sensible of the peril who are able to avert the storm, or affect to be able to govern the helm. And surely if we can escape the danger by throwing overboard some of that useless lumber, and of those cumbrous impediments which I have already pointed out, I think neither yourself, nor any good Englishman, will regret them: we shall sail the lighter, the happier, and the safer without them; more united amongst ourselves, more formidable to the pirates and privateers, that envy our flag, or covet our cargoes; and we shall sail too, with better omens, and a more favourable heaven!

As you are decidedly of opinion that the safest and properest method to obtain this Reform for the people, in a legal and constitutional manner, is to develop the plan gradually and according to the circumstances of the time; and as you are convinced that it might now be granted them, with perfect safety, in a parliamentary manner, and by means fa-

miliar

miliar to our Constitution; by such, for instance, as I have incidentally and occasionally pointed out in the second of my letters, there will remain nothing for me of much importance to say upon that head, farther than that the time ought not wantonly to be sported with, nor any occasion suffered to go by, of giving the people an assurance at least, that it *can* be done for them in Parliament; of which many of them have begun to doubt or to despair; and to which many, from frequent disappointment, as well I fear as from other promises and expectations, have grown very indifferent.

I shall now, before I take my leave of you, my dear Sir, in compliance with your wishes, which will always be laws to me, but with great hesitation and deference, submit to you a few thoughts upon what might have been, in my humble opinion, the conduct of this war, and upon the expediency or propriety of making peace, which you seem to imagine exists at the actual conjuncture of affairs. Respecting the war, I confess, that as (owing to her insular situation, and the immense superiority of her maritime force, as well as the happy influence of her Constitution, and a juster distribution of property, than I think prevails in any other kingdom of Europe) the danger could not be nearer, nor so near to England as it was to the states on the continent, it has appeared to me to be absurd to thrust ourselves so forward upon the scene, and to assume the principal character

character on the drama. It has always been the folly and the vain-glory of this country, to do every thing, and to pay every thing for all her allies; and God knows how long, how often, and how lately, she has had occasion to repent of the power her prodigality procured her of dictating in councils, where she displayed none of the national qualities, excepting its vanity!—yet there were councils in which it would have been for her interest, and for her honour, to have borne sway, where her ascendancy would have been a common advantage to the cause of the allies, and of humanity; and where, if she had bought or won the power to dictate, the benefit would have been acknowledged by Europe, and by mankind.

The war, Sir, was inevitable from the very beginning of the French revolution, notwithstanding the opinion of the learned gentleman who derives it from an act of their third Legislature; and notwithstanding the manifesto of the Ministers, who seem to think that things cannot be placed upon a better footing than they were upon the 9th of August, 1792.—But *Pace virorum tantorum*, the war was unavoidable from the very beginning and principle of the revolution in France: and it was evident that it was so, to every man acquainted with the temper of parties, and the moral and political situation of that kingdom. On the 10th of August, however, by the confession of the manifesto, it became so, and in truth, I know of no alternative of events which could have dispensed with it, though there existed, no doubt, the means of accelerating

celerating, and of retarding it. Government dissimulated this necessity as long as it was able, and suffered itself to be insulted and injured, and pushed to extremities, before it pulled off the mask. Whatever objections the other Courts of Europe, and the wisest of the Royalists, have made to this policy, I shall not venture to blame it, considering the internal state of the country, which was neither serene nor secure. This interval, Sir, however, I mean the interval between the deposition of the King, and the declaration of the war, ought, I think, to have been employed by England in bringing the other powers of the intended confederation to a plain and unequivocal declaration of their ultimate views and intentions, and in binding them by formal and explicit engagements, both to the specific conditions, and to the public object of the alliance. Perhaps, Sir, for example, it would not have been unwise or improper to have stipulated, that none of the high-contracting-parties, who were to form this political crusade against the crimes and usurpations of France, should, during the actual term of the contract at least, *invade*, or *plunder*, or *divide*, the possessions and territories of any other state: That none of the powers who acceded to this engagement, should adopt the principles of the Jacobins, against whom it was directed, or commit any crimes which might extinguish or extenuate, by comparison, the horrors excited by those which were daily perpetrating at Paris; that it should be held to be as unjust and unlawful to hold a sovereign pri-

soner upon the banks of the Niemen as upon those of the Seine; by foreign, as by domestic oppression; and be reputed as violent and arbitrary, to tear a province from a Republic as from the Pope himself.

When these preliminaries had been signed and exchanged, perhaps it would not have been found more difficult to have procured from the King of Prussia in particular, our old friend and ally, distinct and positive engagements, which might have prevented any treachery or interruption being given to the progress of the war, than it has been found to repair these *accidents of the alliance* by the remonstrances of my Lord Yarmouth or by the dexterity and address of my Lord Malmesbury. This precaution, Sir, would, besides the important advantages it would have secured to the Allies; besides the gates of Landau, which it would have opened; besides the influence it might have had in the councils of the Duke of Brunswick, when the retreat from the plains of Chalons was under deliberation; I say, besides this common benefit, it would have saved much anxiety, much dishonour, and much expence to Great Britain. And though, indeed, the Earl of Yarmouth might not have been so soon convinced, or so easily converted by the sycophants of the Rhine, yet the Goddess of Persuasion herself fate upon the banks of the Tagus, and beckoned him to the gardens of Aranjuez.

Seriously,

Seriously, my dear Sir, it appears to me to be worthy of all our regrets, for it is not our loss, but our dishonour also, that the interval of time which elapsed from that period when Ministers were convinced, or ought to have been convinced, of the inevitability of the war, to the moment when the headlong violence and infatuation of France compelled the actual commencement of hostilities; that this interval should not have been employed with more wisdom, precaution, and political skill. The King of Prussia at least, might have been induced, I should imagine, to covenant not to disturb, if joined to the House of Austria, he had not been able to guarantee the tranquillity of Poland. But it occurred, no doubt, to our sagacious and liberal Administration, that it was easier and more consistent to secure Prussia by the abandonment of Poland, by a strict analogy to that honourable principle which had induced it to secure the Court by the sacrifice of the reform! And after all, are they to blame, if there are Kings more Jacobin than the Jacobins of Paris, and Courts more treacherous than the schools of Danton and Barrere?

I think, Sir, however, that the people of this country would have been better satisfied, if they had seen the extraordinary ability and peculiar talents of my Lord Malmsbury directed, during that interval, to the attainment of this object; and that at the present moment they would be happier to think them exerted to obtain, I will not say some assistance, but

some definitive explanation from that ambitious princess, who feeds the flames and fury of contention with her rescripts and her manifestos; who halloos on the dogs of war; but neither risks her blood, nor exhausts her treasure, nor fatigues her strength, by partaking in the chace: Of that ambitious princess, who beholds with equal joy, disease, defeat, or siege or famine, or massacres or battles, thin the contending nations; who exults in the common ruin and desolation, and prepares herself to be the last most dreadful scourge of our European world; subduing us by wounds our own hands have made; founding her barbarous throne upon the ruins we have pulled upon our own heads; and enslaving us by our own madness, folly; depravity and crimes!

But if any measures of prudence or precaution seemed beneath the grandeur and magnanimity of the cabinet of St. James's; or if the King's Ministers in fact knew nothing of the war till it was declared by the Convention, and Breda was invested; if we are to date all their preparations from the embarkation of the guards at Greenwich, and the manifesto of General Dumourier: then, Sir, I cannot but acknowledge that their resentment was equal to their astonishment, and that they resolved to make the war every where with the same wisdom that had made them expect it no where; and they divided their force accordingly into so many different objects and directions, that in return they might surprize France every where, and be able to
make

make an impression upon her no where!—After the expulsion of the French from Holland, I believe I may say the whole kingdom (I beg pardon of the Court, but I had really forgot it) was appalled and afflicted at the ministerial perseverance in sending troops to Flanders; but I have already expressed myself upon this subject, and I had long before imperfectly conveyed my sentiments to the public upon the propriety of that measure*. Some other material points in the conduct of this disastrous campaign, I have examined in the early part of this Letter; it remains for me to say a few words upon others, of which I have purposely reserved the consideration for the present opportunity, that their impression might not be diminished by the horror I am sure you have felt at the too faithful detail I have given you, of the corrupt and guilty causes of so many and such fatal consequences!

Of those vain and dilatory expeditions to the West-Indies, after the unhappy attempts of Admiral Gardner, perpetually postponed and sacrificed by the folly and trepidation of Government, to new and fugitive objects, to wild and impracticable projects, to Dunkirk, to Toulon, to St. Maloes, but always to the favourite scheme of Continental warfare and invasions; I shall not permit myself to examine the details. The evident absurdity and deplorable issue of the at-

Vide Postscript to the First Letter to Mr. Fox.

tempt against Corsica, has almost been overlooked and forgotten in the general mass of our errors and miscarriages, in the great total of public misfortune and disgrace! the imperfect accounts hitherto received from Toulon, make me necessarily reserved, though I cannot suppress the whole of my sorrow and consternation, nor conceal the disgust and shame with which I have beheld that unhappy and dishonorable scene, which has closed our tragic pantomime in the Mediterranean—I leave to others to lament with real or affected grief, the miseries of that unhappy city, and to deplore with feeling or eloquence, the fierce revenges which desolate her habitations. To others I abandon the sad and painful task of recapitulating our own losses, and of mourning the brave and British blood which has streamed so plentifully, which has been so uselessly, and so prodigally squandered under its walls. To others I depute the invidious labour of counting the treasures which have been lavished to retain it, the pensions, salaries, and annuities which survive its surrender! I will confine myself to one plain and dispassionate argument, and I will leave it to make its own impression upon the unbiassed reason of the public, without any aid from an arrangement of words, from reflexions of sorrow, of humanity, or if I can suppress them, of indignation.

Either Toulon was tenable, or it was not tenable: in the first case, it is plain, that it ought to have been defended on the 19th of December; in the second

cond, it ought to have been relinquished long before the republican army was in sufficient force to compel and to impede our embarkation;—not a ship, not a military magazine, not thirty pieces of cannon, not a quintal of gunpowder; and much more, not a man, or a woman, or a child, desirous to embark, ought to have been left, or needed to have been left at Toulon. No blood, no treasure, needed to have been lavished there; Sir Gilbert Elliot, and all his suite, needed not to have been appointed, nor the troops of Naples, and so many other nations, to have been transported there. So many brave but unprofitable sallies, needed not to have been attempted; General O'Hara need not now be a prisoner, nor our bosoms to be troubled for the fate of this gallant, but unhappy Commander. There is blame somewhere, and it cannot be denied. Messrs. Rose and Burgess, I appeal to you once more! Was it tenable, or was it not so?—My opinion is that it was *not*, for I know the valour and the skill of the noble Lord who commanded the fleet, and of the General and troops who were in possession of the fortress; and I think too that it was *not*, because I know that the corruption of the Administration is as great as its ignorance, and its profusion equal to every thing but its contempt both for the public interest and the public opinion.—While Toulon served as a pretext for patronage, while it furnished appointments and salaries, and procured mercenary friends to the Minister, Toulon was *tenable*; while it provided for their proselytes,

purchased impunity for themselves, Toulon was *tenable*; while it conferred sinecures and paid votes in the House of Commons, Toulon was *tenable*.— But when the system was complete, when the objects were attained, when avarice was gorged, and corruption saturated; when the stipulated reversions and the promised pensions were merited and legalized, Toulon became *untenable*, though it was too useful to be abandoned till the precise moment of attack; the Ministers regarded it with affectionate regret, and, longed and lingered, till a great part of our most important acquisition was necessarily lost, till our blood had streamed, and the ships and stores which might have been brought off before with perfect safety, were, I fear, but imperfectly destroyed.

I will not give way to my feelings upon this subject; but I should neither do justice to the Public nor to myself, who have been once accused of partiality to Ministers, if I did not declare, in the most unequivocal and explicit terms, that here again is matter of IMPEACHMENT; that the marks and footsteps of corruption are plain and visible through all this opprobrious transaction, and that it is the duty of every man, whose talents, whose zeal, or whose industry can enable him to supply, in any degree, the irreparable deficiency of a virtuous minority in Parliament, to trace it to its lair, to that impure and nauseous den, where the monster retires to devour and divide its prey..... Oh, Sir, what might not, at
this

this time, a virtuous minority, a national party, what might it not atchieve for the country? what might it not procure, what might it not prevent, what blessings might it not confer, what miseries might it not avert from our heads and those of our children! Yes, Sir, I have already said it, but I must repeat it again and again, majorities may plunge us into distress, but minorities only can plunge us into despair—where are we to look for redress, and where for atonement? Who shall break that horrid contract, who shall finish the impunity, which is the source of ministerial crimes, and the price of the public misery and misfortune? Where are the defenders of liberty, where are the champions of the Constitution? Alas, our eyes seek them in vain, or weep to find them wandering, like fullen ghosts, in the aisles and avenues of the Court, or hiding themselves in the guilty crowd that surrounds them, from our reproving search, from their own surviving sentiments of honour—The suppressed, but inextinguishable flame of public virtue, scorches and consumes the souls that have dared to desert or to betray her!

Give me leave now to enter into a very brief consideration of the prospects of peace, and the opinion I am sorry to suspect you entertain of the expediency of the negotiation!

The only found argument, I confess, I have heard for making peace, is the extreme imbecility and incapacity of his Majesty's servants to make war, and the danger of confiding the management of it to any party that could suddenly be found to succeed to them. And I freely acknowledge that I think it a strong argument, and one which, under other circumstances, it would have been very adventurous, and perhaps very preposterous, to controvert. But firmly persuaded as I am that the salvation of the country and of Europe depends, not only upon our success, but upon our perseverance in the war; and that time is at least as necessary as force itself, to coerce the infatuated people against whom we wage it; I am sorry to see the efforts of the kingdom made so furious and violent, and our strength and resources exerted and exhausted with so little foresight or discretion, as to leave us no alternative between immediate triumph and immediate ruin. And this I say, Sir, independently of the absurdity and ignorance with which these efforts have been directed, and which have naturally caused them to miscarry in so many places.

The force of France has always been proportioned to the vigour of the attack made upon her, and has never been greater than it, because it required the danger to create the spirit, and the exigency to furnish the means of resistance. If France had been attacked by us at sea only, she would have beheld St. Domingo, Martinico, Gaudaloupe, the Mauritius, the
Isle

Isle of Bourbon, and all her Indian possessions in either world, surrender one by one, with a carelessness and indifference, of which it is not easy to form an idea, without having read the books, and observed the effect of the books, circulated so long at Paris, by the Brissotine party in particular; and without having witnessed the enthusiasm with which, even before the gates of the Hotel de Massiac, “*périssent les colonies,*” had been echoed upon every occasion, where there had been a question of commerce or colonization, in opposition to Republicanism or war. But supposing me to over-rate the indifference with which these losses might have been received at Paris, I shall not, I apprehend, be contradicted, when I assert that they could not have caused all the sensation there, nor all the alarm, nor all the indignation which we have seen excited by dangers nearer home, and by the siege of towns, in which we have preferred to take a part, to so many richer and more easy acquisitions. Tobago lost occasioned scarce a murmur; but the unhappy attempt against Dunkirk put all France into a state of requisition, and embodied the very mass of the people in one innumerable militia.—The whole plan of the war, I confess, appears to me to have been mistaken, defective, and absurd. If it was thought possible to frighten France, as it appeared to M. Mallet du Pan, and the royalists, we ought to have declared, or according to a more favourite system of the Cabinet, to have threatened at least, when Austria and Prussia coalesced, and to have become parties

to

to the declaration of Pilnitz. The common declaration of all Europe might perhaps at that time have intimidated France, but the Courts came so slowly into the confederation, and dropped so childishly and so timidly one after another into the scheme, that whatever effect might have been hoped from terror or astonishment, was now entirely forfeited and past. If it was thought possible to crush France by one general effort, and that Austrians, Prussians, Spaniards and Piedmontese, by a common and concerted irruption, disregarding such paltry obstacles as the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, and the Alps and Pyrenees of Vauban in particular, might unite their forces at the capital, as it appeared to M. de Bouillé and the wives of the emigrants; then the British Fleet was "*bars de combat*," and the Maréchal de Freytag became a personage of more importance than my Lord Howe, my Lord Hood, and all their Admirals! If this system had been adopted, or rather confided in, for I am afraid it was never despaired of intirely, before experience had begot a still worse kind of despair, if this system had been trusted to, the subsidies to Sardinia, Hesse, Hanover, &c. &c. would not have been half so absurd, because they would naturally have derived from the absurd system which had been adopted; but when that system was adopted, which for the sake of being intelligible, I call a system, and it was determined to carry on hostilities every where, without carrying war any where; when it was agreed to fritter and dribble away the force of the kingdom

without

without any fixed object or design, and to puzzle if we could not frighten France, with the immensity and the multiplicity of our objects, when with two hundred and eighty vessels of war, it was determined to do nothing by sea, and in spite of nature, policy, and experience, to attempt every thing by land; I say, when these views were adopted, which seemed, no doubt, so wise and so easy to my Lord Chatham, and so wise and so natural to the Duke of Richmond, when these views were adopted, and we had troops or commissioners in every camp, not to speak of the criminal absurdity of having a camp of our own, when all these things were evident, it seemed evident also, that the prodigality of the war, was not only accidental or negligent, but designed and accessory to other plans and designs, and the fate of Europe wilfully and deliberately set upon one desperate cast. This no doubt encouraged the enemy as much as it discouraged the nation; and disgusted the nation by its just apprehensions, as much as it irritated the enemy by its just contempt, and by the partial but ineffectual impressions which were so uselessly made upon its territory.

Now, Sir, the object of the war, which is as different from its cause, as its cause is from the circumstances that necessitated its declaration, is, in my opinion, neither more nor less, than to repulse the French within their own territory while they are mad, and having cured them of their madness, or awaited the abatement

abatement of the fit, to send every man home to his particular employment and profession, and to extinguish the principle that every man is a soldier, and every field common. Wherever these doctrines are believed or enforced, there can be no security for any neighbouring State, for either it must be conquered and overrun, or it must grow mad too, in order to be able to resist by the same numbers and exertions. A standing army set up in one kingdom has forced all the States of Europe to maintain standing armies, and a standing revolution will necessitate standing revolutions. France is just now powerful because she is ruined, we are weak because we fear to be ruined; but the same crimes would enable us to display the same vigour, and rather than be destroyed by France, it is probable we should declare the property and lives of the kingdom in a state of requisition too. I have stated this because it was our duty and interest to suffer France to crumble by her own rottenness, to oppose her only so much and no more, as her own particular violence and ambition should require from us, to have assisted the royalists and the federalists too, and every sect or party, that divided or opposed the Convention, and diminished the central strength and authority of Paris; and to have neither declared nor betrayed any predilection for any form of her disputable Government, much less to have pledged ourselves in favour of the most desperate of all; and to have asserted in our Manifesto as a fact, what every individual in that country knew

to be a falsehood, the operation of which they would instantly conclude to be intended to deceive and to blind another country than their own. The war ought to have been considered as secondary and auxiliary to the insurrections, and no counter-revolution to have been looked for except from the experience of their own misery and crimes, and from their own repentance and remorse.

The Jacobins, who one would imagine were the the only statesmen in Europe, instead of being dismayed with the formidable but ill-connected force which menaced them, were well pleased at an idle appearance, which lent them real strength and resources, and enabled them to unite almost every description of persons in the cause of the capital, which it was now easy to confound with that of the nation; their violence kept pace with the threats of the invader, and their force redoubled even with his successes; they were able to confiscate and to plunder, to confine, to try, to execute, and to grow rich and terrible together, in proportion as he advanced into their territory or triumphed over their volunteers. They knew to turn every misfortune into an advantage, and gathered strength from every defeat; they had nothing to apprehend in particular from any one quarter of the war, and they derived a general and universal power and augmentation, from every particular loss or accident which happened to them in any. Such were the consequences of the mode adopted of
 carrying

carrying on the war. But if the war had been conducted fastidiously, (if I may use such an expression) if Great-Britain in particular had precisely proportioned her efforts to the efforts of France, observing always that superiority in each department of it which was necessary to insure success; the long and distant prospect would have damped and obscured the sanguine vision of the Convention; it would have carried despair into its own bosom, and given it no pretence, no opportunity to animate and exalt the passions of the people; it would have seen many years of hostility and danger hanging over it, and its object would have become faint and indistinct from the remoteness and contingency of its completion. It would have seen its ports blockaded, its commerce ruined, its supplies cut off, its provisions intercepted, *perhaps* its Fleets attacked and beaten; still Great-Britain would scarce have perceived she was at war; her expences would have been moderate, and her commerce might have encreased from the encrease of her maritime possessions, from the complete command of the Levant trade; and even of the Baltic, if she had thought proper to negotiate before the actual commencement of hostilities; and what, in my mind, is more valuable than any other consideration, she might have remained at the end of the war the umpire and arbitress of Europe, instead of an interested and exhausted party in the quarrel, and possibly instead of being compelled to accept the terms of pacification,

tion, from another power, who may discover an Oc-
zakow in the West-Indies, or the Mediterranean.

From what I have said, my dear Sir, you will easily understand that my objection to treating (though I would not in any case treat with these who had been personally instrumental in the public crimes) is not because France is republican, but because she is revolutionary, it is not the form of her government, but the principle of her civil union, (if it may still be called so) which forms an eternal barrier to peace, because it is incompatible with the confidence or security of surrounding States. The question, therefore, will be this, are we to reduce or to exterminate this people with whom we cannot treat, before we can lay down our arms, and return to our fields and manufactures? Or at what point of conquest and success will it be safe to suspend our hostilities? I had rather his Majesty's servants would condescend to answer this important question, than attempt it for myself; but it appears to me, Sir, that we need not to carry on an eternal or indefinite warfare, notwithstanding the impossibility of treating. It is, I think, pretty much with nations as it is with individuals, in whom it is impossible to confide; a pledge or a deposit is as valuable and as safe from the hands of a knave, as from those of a man of honour, and the possession of towns and islands, of territories and of commerce, may undoubtedly be as good a security for observing the

terms of a contract, as the oath of a King, or the signature of an Ambassador. In the strict case of the *uti-possidetis* I can see no occasion for any treaty at all, and I am convinced that a treaty is an useless formality. I make war to obtain possession of Calais, I take Calais and no one endeavours to retake it; I might surely rest upon my arms in such a case, and might dispense too with a treaty, because no treaty could ever make out a title, or convey it to me by any better or safer tenure than my own superiority.

He who looks for any other treaty than this, under any event, or any other security from the physical preponderance of France, than our own strength and those moral resources, which the spirit, the industry, and the virtues of our nation, have hitherto supplied to combat in this unequal field; is blind to that unconquerable malice and envy, with which our little island is regarded by that vain and disappointed people, to that spirit of ambition and revenge, to those idle boasts of "*delenda est Carthago*," which have been echoed from the impure mouth of Barrère and his colleagues, to every sea and every mountain that encircles France; and what is more, which have been caught up and prolonged in distant realms, by the very exiles and fugitives of France; who in the wreck of all their fortunes, amidst the massacres of their friends and companions, amidst regicide and sacrilege, and universal misery, seem to regret nothing

thing in banishment or poverty so much as the opportunity they have lost of conquering their hosts and benefactors.

If there be any man in this kingdom so absurd as to expect from the restoration of the French monarchy, any firm alliance, or any sense or memory of obligation from France, he knows little of nations in general, and nothing, I think, of that nation in particular. If we are really to make the war for this end, we are fighting for those who are already, I fear, ungrateful, and will add ingratitude to all the vices and crimes that have plunged them in so many misfortunes. To his Majesty's Ministers I can only address my earnest prayer, that they would be pleased, at last, to explain "the real grounds of the war," in a precise and unequivocal manner, let them conduct it how they will; for almost any war is better than a shameful, an insincere, and an insecure pacification; let us know what we bleed for, and how long we are to bleed; remove this cloud from our eyes, *εν δε φάτι και ολεσσαν.* It is indifferent to me whether Jupiter disperses the mist by the help of Mr. Bowles or of another Manifesto.

But if it should be judged imprudent in his Majesty's servants, who, notwithstanding the calumnies of their enemies, seem determined to treat at one time or other, and to treat with Danton rather than

not to treat at all ; if it is judged imprudent in those who chose to mis-translate Lord Auckland, rather than to avow him, to preclude themselves, by any previous engagement or explanation respecting the causes or objects of the war, from concluding the peace under any other event or circumstance than those which they had stipulated and foreseen ; then, it will be proper to change the question, and to intreat, that his Majesty's Ministers will be pleased to acquaint us (a piece of information, I confess, I expected when I heard of the treaty concluded in the camp of the King of Prussia, under the auspices of my Lord Yarmouth) whether the republic is in any case to be treated with, and to be acknowledged under any condition ? And as we cannot learn at what point of success it may be possible to pause with security, we may demand without much danger, I imagine, what degree of misfortune, ill-conduct, absurdity, and dishonour, will make it appear necessary to negotiate, or at least to suspend hostilities ? but perhaps they will have no judges but experience itself of the period beyond which it will be impossible to confide to them any longer the conduct of the war ?

In my own opinion, to declare we will not treat with the republic, is as unwise and as unjust, as to insist upon the restoration of any form of government, whether republic, despotism, or constitution ; I should be willing to treat with either, as soon as we can
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have any security for the observance of the stipulations of peace. Disarm, send back your labourers, your peasants, to their farms; rescind your decrees of general requisition; these are the first articles of any treaty; whoever is able to promise and to perform these stipulations, is Government enough to treat with, because it is Government enough to afford security to the parties in the contract; and if we refuse to treat, whenever we can treat with this security, it appears to me that the objects of the war are more extensive than the causes, and that we are fighting for something else besides our own safety and the tranquillity of Europe.

But, believe me, my dear Sir, that this satisfaction, which I implore for the nation, is not merely to gratify its curiosity, nor to extinguish any vain doubts, or unreasonable suspicions; when that corrupt agreement took place, between the Court and the Ministers, by which the strength and popularity of reform were abandoned for the power of prodigality, and the means of impunity: by which the Court, with true papal cunning, exchanged its bull of indulgencies for an undisturbed and securer term in its own luxury and uncleanness; when this union and alliance became known by its effects, and the war was jointly declared against the French and the Reformers, against the Convention and the press, it was natural, at least during so much noise and clamour, that it should distract and perplex the under-

standing of the people; and accordingly we found, that some of them very early considered the war as the war of the Court, and dreaded the successes of our arms, as an accession of power to this domestic enemy, whom they despised, and dreaded, and detested infinitely more than the foreign. There were others, who openly desired the success of the French arms, which they thought could alone protect us against the formidable league, which not only excluded reform, but threatened the remains of liberty and independence: and who would have seen the Convention triumph with exultation, as the means of punishing, or abolishing the Court. I cannot help stopping in this place, to remark to you the squeamishness and coquetry of the Court upon this occasion, which affected to pout and to be vastly surprized and affronted, that the people should despise or detest it as much as the Jacobins; just as if the ferocious vices were entitled to all our hatred and contempt, and we should have no resentments left for the base and degrading; as if the bold and hardy character of crimes were alone the cause of horror, and we were to feel no indignation at meanness, fraud, servility, avarice, extortion, and oppression!

It is certain however, that the people, upon their side, very soon began to apprehend, that victories would only procure to their old enemy a new lease and perpetuity in its abuses, and to consider the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg, as fighting the battles of Lord

Chamberlains

Chamberlains and Lords of the Bed-chamber, instead of those of Europe and of mankind; an opinion the more dangerous, as, joined to the persecution of the bookfellers, it had introduced a real schism into the kingdom, which could not have been otherwise than united, if the Government had explained all the danger which threatened us, and left the sentiments of horror and antipathy it desired us to feel, to the free workings of our own understanding. But feeling its own weakness, from the unpopularity of its new ally, it was always afraid to confess the whole of the danger; till the ill conduct and miscarriages of the war, by encreasing this fear, have at last forced its weakness into the abominable imposition, to which it has condescended, of representing the generality of the enemy as disposed to counter-revolution and monarchy: Thus is a system of fraud, dissimulation, perfidy, and dishonour, naturally engrafted upon a treaty, in which public virtue and public utility were made to give way to a mean and contemptible policy, unworthy the Viziers and eunuchs of an Eastern Seraglio, and by which the impunity of Ministers was purchased, by prolonging the wrongs and miseries of the people.

Now, Sir, nothing can be more important than to do away this fatal impression; the reduction of the Civil List, and the reform of the Parliament, would, doubtless, be the most effectual measures which could be pursued for this desirable purpose: but an explicit

declaration from authority of the true situation of the kingdom, of the views entertained by Government, of the prospects of peace, or of the term of hostilities, could not be without a strong and beneficial effect for the present; and I sincerely indulge the hope of seeing the next *State Paper*, whether distinguished by the appellation of Speech or Manifesto, that shall be dated from Westminster or St. James's, conceived in a more manly and more honourable strain, polluted by no craft or dissimulation, advancing no falsehoods, no equivocal facts nor opinions, but addressed to the plain sense and magnanimity of the nation, worthy of it, and of him who is to speak to it.

But though from the past conduct, and actual disposition of the King's servants, I cannot entertain any sanguine expectation of finding them inclined to diminish corruption, or to concur with those who demand a greater security for the freedom and independency of the House of Commons; whether they seek it by new experiments, or would have recourse for it to ancient and approved remedies, I should blame myself exceedingly, were I to suppress the astonishment and concern I feel at the imbecility and the obstinacy of those perverse or perfidious councils, which have not only refused redress to the people, but dared to multiply grievances, and to accumulate the causes of complaint. I confess, Sir, I doubt whether the nursery for young statesmen will ever repay to the nation all the charges of this new and

delicate attention; and I entertain some fears lest they should escape out of it too soon, notwithstanding the mess of porridge which might otherwise tempt them to sojourn, because so many others of the sons of the prophets may be desirous to partake of it in their turn; in truth I fear that some of them may prove truant, and be discovered to be Ambassadors and Plenipotentiaries at foreign Courts, before, in spite of their political accomplishments, the law will allow them to be at age of discretion. I protest, Sir, I entertain this apprehension, not from want of respect to any of the young gentlemen, who are actually charged with his Majesty's procuration to so many of the Sovereigns Europe; but because I think the nation may be dishonoured by it. If other nations are not insulted, by making their Courts, the nursery of our infant-politicians I think our own nation dishonoured by it, not because these young men do not acquit themselves, at least as well as might be expected in their task, but because it inclines all Europe to believe the *calumnies* that are vomitted against our Constitution, and to suspect that every employment, every department of the State is usurped by the tyranny and injustice of aristocracy and connexion!

To return from grievances to those who sweat and suffer under all, who feed these nurseries, and pay these baby embassies,—to the people: is it wise, for I speak not of its honesty, to provoke and exasperate, and insult it, at a time when so much industry and artifice

have

have been employed to disgust it with the Constitution all together? If the people were gratified in half its just and reasonable desires, it would be out of the power of agitators and reformers to make it an instrument to extort unjust or unreasonable concessions. But when the people is once made to demand, he who can cry the loudest, and demands the most, appears its true and only friend; it favours the violent, and confides only in the enthusiastic and the headstrong. We begin by demanding its rights; another demands exemptions or favours; a third flatters its passions and prejudices, and a fourth offers majesty, and proclaims the sovereignty of the people. All these men have their turn, but the wickedest and most desperate is always the last; Petion succeeds to La Fayette, Marat to Petion; and after Marat comes a Robespierre, a Danton, or a Barrere. Let us not presume too far upon the character and virtues of the country; all crowds are dangerous, all assemblies cruel. Were we to undergo in England a violent reform, or to depute a National Convention, I am not convinced that we should legislate with much more wisdom or justice than we have seen in France; though I think we should execute, or even violate our laws, with more regard to humanity, to mercy, and to nature. We should no doubt have our plunderers and levellers, but perhaps assassins and murderers would be more uncommon; we should have proscriptions, though we might escape massacres; and we might be violent, without being deliberately

cruel; even punishment and revenge itself might divert themselves amongst us of some of their French ferocity, some of their adventitious refinement and horror. But this is all that I dare indulge my national vanity to hope for in such a ferment and convulsion of men's minds, during the shock of authorities, the silence of law, and the subversion of every rule and principle of human society. Those who would plunge us into this crisis, whether they be statesmen or the enemies of states, whether they be the followers of Mr. Pitt or of Mr. Paine, are, in my mind, the most deliberate incendiaries; and I am sorry to say, that in such a complicity of crime, I can only distinguish, in favour of those who may have overstepped in a just cause, against those who shall have been unjust and tyrannical from the beginning.

If therefore you, my dear Sir, remain as thoroughly convinced, as you appeared to be a few weeks since, of the impolicy and injustice of the King's Ministers and the majority of the House of Commons, in refusing satisfaction to the people upon this subject: Of the danger of trifling with the wishes and the complaints of a free and powerful nation; of the crime and flagitiousness of driving the country to despair, and forcing men to have recourse to measures, which despair alone can justify: If you remain convinced of the wickedness of having engaged us in a continental war, and the folly and incapacity with which that war has been conducted; of the
shameful

shameful and inexplicable inactivity of our fleets, of the dishonour attending our miscarriages before Martique and Guadaloupe; of the neglect and want of foresight at Toulon, to which I have since been forced to add a heavier charge, and of the universal ill conduct of the Admiralty-Board; of the ignorance, errors, and treachery, which caused the miscarriage of the Duke of York before Dunkirk, the defeat of the Feldt Marschal de Freytag, and of General Clairfait, the raising the siege of Maubeuge, and the repassing of the Sambre, which inverted or ruined all the plans of the campaign, and sowed the fruitful seeds of discord amongst the combined armies; of the conceit, impertinence, and abstract absurdity, of imposing that measure upon his Royal Highness and the allies; if, in short, you are convinced, as I have reason to believe, that we can expect nothing good, either at home or abroad, from his Majesty's Ministers; that they act without plan or foresight, without concert or principle; that they have contrived to render absolutely ineffectual, and paralytic, all our efforts by sea, and unfortunate all our expeditions at land; that they have dishonoured our arms, for I can never repeat it too often, upon that element, where we never possessed, no Sir, nor any nation, nor any confederacy of nations, ever possessed so great and decided superiority over the enemy; that they have exposed the British name to reproach and ignominy, by the comparison which must be made by every Court in Europe, between the glorious victories we obtained in the last war, when we combated

against

against France, and against all the world, and our late achievements, now that we combat against France alone, with all the world on our side, now when we want nothing but an enemy, and then when we could find nothing that was not an enemy ; if you are convinced, in short, that the King's servants possess neither the talents to give us glory or success abroad, nor the virtue to grant us peace and justice at home, you will find yourself, like me, unable to give them your confidence, and you will just give them that degree of support, which will appear to you to be necessary to hinder their adversaries from seizing the helm of affairs, and making an infamous peace with our enemies ; you will support them upon that principle which induced the woman of Syracuse to pray for the life of Dionysius the tyrant, from the greater apprehension she entertained of his successors ; you will neither approve nor applaud their measures, nor even join in the formality of an address ; you will suspect, you will watch, you will restrain the Administration ; you will awe, you will intimidate, you will silence the ambition, the madness of the Opposition ; you will represent the anxiety and suspense that agitate the nation, and the imminent hazards which result, from its being unable to place its confidence, or entrust its complaints to any known or responsible party in the kingdom ; you will impress Ministers with the necessity of yielding to the remonstrances of the people, of avoiding insurrections by just concession and disappointing revolutions, by rational re-
form ;

form; you will inculcate the hatred and contempt of corrupt placemen and courtiers, and distinguish the pure and generous loyalty of Britons to their King, from the base crouching of slaves to the mandarins and satrapes of St. James's; you will impress even Ministers themselves with the prudence and the necessity (you will not, perhaps, think it incumbent upon you to talk to them of the duty or the virtue) of disbanding those mercenary troops, which are their own tyrants, as well as the tyrants and the famishers of the people; of the advantage and popularity of reducing sinecures and diminishing the Civil List, before they venture to levy that enormous mass of fresh taxes and impositions, which their prodigal and absurd mismanagement of the war has made necessary, and which cannot be dissembled or palliated by loans, or by an averfion, a delay, or an impossibility to fund them. You will do what is in your power, and more is in no man's power, to bring them to a sense of policy and of fear, the only impresson under which it is reasonable to expect from them either wisdom or justice, and you will be ready to stand forth the champion of the people's just rights, and to disappoint the ambition of both factions, the ministerial and the revolutionary!

You who are so well acquainted with my sentiments upon these subjects, will not be inclined to suspect, from any thing that I have said, that I lean beyond a just bias towards the representative system;

tem ; but as I am anonymous to nearly all the world but yourself, it is necessary for me, or at least prudent, to give my political creed and confession with regard to it ; and I shall do it with sincerity, perhaps with too much simplicity. I think then no system so true, so beautiful, so natural, or so sublime, in theory ; and I am convinced, that republics upon this principle, must be the favourite governments of all enlightened minds, and the idols of every generous spirit, I mean till they have been tried ; for in the practice and experiment they are found to fail miserably, and to depart widely from their promise and expectation ; it is the experience of the ill, and unstable government of republics that has made any man of sense or spirit submit, or desire to live under monarchies ; now, unfortunately, the people who cannot read nor reason, and have no experience but their own, unacquainted with history, and strangers to the States and Governments around them, know of no bad or unstable Government but their own ; born under monarchy, they attribute to it the evils inseparable from human societies ; and think, that if they could get rid of a particular form of Government and of a King, they should be freed also from the hardships they suffer and the burthens they endure. If a people be oppressed and unhappy under a republican form of government, which is more likely than under the monarchical, because there rarely exists a great degree of civil liberty under this regimen (and political liberty is of small comparative importance

importance to the mass of society,) the same principle will operate under a different form, for they will think that by getting rid of a senate or of a council, or by accepting a King, they shall be discharged from their contributions, and that their grievances will be instantly redressed.—The people therefore desire a change, because from a change they expect every thing: Uncertain of the future, weary of the past, and impatient of the present, they indulge the hope and delusive dream of a sanguine imagination, and fatigued and exhausted with their known grievances willingly commit themselves with confidence and ardor to whatever is new and untried. Of the representative system therefore, which is theoretically so beautiful, I entertain this opinion, that it is calculated peculiarly to seduce the imagination, and to bias the judgment, of those persons, especially, who have neither leisure nor opportunity to consider it when reduced to its action and experiment as a Government; and I think it more easy to make the mass of a people discontented with the monarchical institution, from the hope and beauty of the representative, than it is *vice versa* to disgust republican States with their form of Government, and to induce amongst them a desire and eagerness after the monarchical system. For this reason too, I think it absurd and dangerous in the extreme, in the King's servants to break their faith, and trifle with the people upon such delusive and flattering ground.—As to the representative part of our own Constitution, I am free to confess, that I think

think all the liberty, all the blessings we either enjoy, or have enjoyed, or have a right to look for, have been, and must be, derived implicitly from this branch of our legislature, and must depend for their security and duration upon its independence and virtue; and this sentiment would make me groan over the corruption and depravity of the House of Commons, while the vices of the Court, and the indolence and vanity of the House of Lords, could scarce excite any sensation in my breast but that of scorn or fastidious pity, or perhaps involuntary disgust.

Neither am I at all clear, that the representative system could long subsist in its vigour or purity in any State, where it was not restrained and coerced by some other independent and integral body; and I am far from being satisfied, with the experience which is said to be furnished us in the American form of Government.—In France we have found the Monarch was unable to controul it, but I think this instance proves very little against it, just as the former proves very little in its favour; for both, in my opinion, are matters of circumstance, which have never been fairly brought to experiment or trial. Had Louis the sixteenth, enjoyed, or had Washington not enjoyed the confidence of their respective countries, I think it very possible, that the direct contrary inference might now have been concluded from each of these examples; that the French Constitution might have yet stood, and the American

have given way. So little do I feel myself entitled to appeal to either of these questionable and imperfect authorities. Yet I think from a remoter experience and analogy, it is more probable that the representative system should exist, under the mild and gradual compression or reaction of a senate, than under the enormous weight and disparity of a throne. not only on account of the hatred and danger of Courts, but because between a King and a people, there is a sudden and a mighty disproportion, and an intermediate political body seems to be absolutely necessary to connect them together, if a people would have any liberty, or a King any security at all. A people too may resist a senate, and make a hundred partial revolutions without totally overthrowing or subverting the system of Government, because some of that body will remain, and the rest may be supplied; and of those that remain, the majority will have probably become popular, by adopting the prevailing sentiments of the times, and thereby be able to damp or to intercept the blow, before it crushes or annihilates the order.—Individuals may perish, but the political body may remain, be invigorated or renewed, which can scarce happen for the most evident reasons, in the case of a violent revolution, in monarchical Governments.

The desire of change so natural therefore to every people, (for the lot of every people is, I fear, unhappy, and certainly is not so happy as it always seems

seems possible to make it) appears to me to be more dangerous in monarchical states, than in republics of any description: and there is great room to apprehend that it is now exceedingly strong in our own, and that it will acquire force, and break out with irresistible fury as soon as the fear of anarchy and massacre shall have evaporated, or as soon as any possible success or advantage should attend the arms of France, or the French Revolution become at all established upon any firm or apparent basis. It is then, my dear Sir, I think peculiarly to be desired, at this awful and important crisis, that the people should have no wanton or unnecessary cause of complaint; and that the love of change, and the temptation to change, should be as little encouraged or increased as is possible. And I think besides, that Ministers and Courts would act wisely to consult not only the interests and the rights, but the affections and the passions of the people, at a time when so many arts and delusions are practised to inflame them. But the vanity and ambition of some men causes them to desire and prefer turbulent times, in which they flatter themselves they shall be able always to bear sway, and makes them confide in being received at any time as chiefs and heroes by the partizans of every revolution.

This was the precise case of the Minister Neckar, and may be the case of Ministers as vain and less honest than Neckar, if they will not take warning by

his example, to extinguish just complaints as fast as they arise, rather than to encourage and provoke them, delaying the remedy, and fomenting the disease, till such critical and dangerous periods, as they expect, will make the relief more valued, and themselves more popular and powerful for affording it. But these courses are the most dangerous, as well as the most wicked they can pursue; for in such moments of heat and fermentation, the people is not contented with the redress of its grievances. It is sensible of its force, as well as of its wrongs; and as it attributes every concession on the part of its oppressors to the effect of their fears and apprehensions, it determines to encrease or to continue the impression, which is so favourable to its own interests and passions. In such a moment, those who demand are more popular than those who grant; and he that menaces is more powerful than him that concedes. The people enjoys a triumph as often as it obtains redress, and had rather conquer its rights than receive them.

If the people had been indulged at first with that temperate Reform which they wanted, and which it is so base and so indecent to refuse them, the Minister, it is true, would not have derived a dangerous, but he would have gained a solid and a just popularity: as there would have been neither anxiety nor peril, so there would have been neither intemperance nor excessive exultation. It is to be apprehended it cannot

now be granted without the people's being induced to believe they owe it to the fears and pusillanimity of Ministers or of Parliament; and that they will look upon it rather as a triumph that they have won, than a right restored, or a benefit conferred upon them. The Minister and his rival may run a race for this popularity, but the wise and honest, will see that it is extorted from both, and the people will not long remain the dupes of the competition. I think it necessary, therefore, that the party I have spoken of should be formed speedily, not only to procure a Reform from the unwilling justice of both sides of the House, but to confer it with any grace or safety upon the people: and I am the more desirous to see the foundation at least laid, of such a party, because I think its very appearance might check the impatience and indignation of the people, and persuade them to expect the reasonable gratification of their wishes by calm and temperate means, and from hands at which they would be content to receive it; which it is much to be apprehended they would not, in the present irritable disposition of their minds, be inclined to do from such as have already basely and impudently violated their promises and engagements with regard to it, or from such as have sunk into contempt and discredit, from the profligate opposition they have given to measures of public necessity, and fallen so low, both in number and estimation, as to move no sentiments but those of ridicule, aversion, or pity.

That

That a third party *will* arise to extort this benefit, and to take the ambitious merit of having conferred it upon the people, appears to me so plain, and so evident, that my only concern, and my only apprehension, is with regard to the purity, the independence, and the integrity of its composition. That the people will finally acquire the benefit I have no doubt; and therefore I am exceedingly anxious that it should acknowledge the obligation, *where it is safe for it to be grateful*. For this reason I anxiously wish, that the body who shall procure it for them, and present it to them, were so composed that it might embrace the untainted part of the actual authorities, and men of honour, and of abilities, and of property, of every party and description; and it is for this reason that I fear, lest from the oversight or the too great caution of such persons, it should be formed out of the bold and bad men, who have presided in clubs and assemblies, or led our mutinous deputations of English to the bar of the French Convention, or circulated its wild theories and inflammatory manifestos amongst the people; and lest the people, either in the eagerness to obtain this benefit, or in gratitude for it, should throw itself into the arms of these turbulent and unprincipled men, in whose hands it will presently become a dangerous instrument to level every rank, introduce new and destructive principles of property, and lay the admired fabric of our Constitution lower than the throne of Louis the Sixteenth.

In calling upon Mr. Fox to preside over such a party, I had entertained the double view of gaining a leader of his power, experience, and abilities on the side of honest and constitutional reform; and of cutting off the hope and expectation of the speculative and the disaffected of every sect and party, who evidently courted him, and looked up to him, as one that was soon to take the command and direction of them. His conduct at that time caused me extreme uneasiness; and I cannot repent of the pains I have taken, and the inducements I have held out to recall him from a precipice, so dangerous to himself and to his country. I had confidence besides in the virtues of his mind, and I was in hopes to make them combat with me, against the impetuosity of his passions, the rancour of his disappointment, and the violence of his ambition. I may not perhaps have failed so entirely in my attempt, as the imperfect success of it may at first sight induce you to imagine; from my own motives, and from the honest rewards I held out to him, I had reason, no doubt, to hope a better and more entire conversion.

Diis aliter visum est.

But whatever may be your opinions or prejudices with regard to this extraordinary personage, you will allow, I am sure, that he has always acted an important character upon our political theatre; and that it would be unwise, if it were not ungrateful to leave him out in any new cast of the parts. His abilities,

lities, his vigour of mind, his comprehensive judgment, his experience, his eloquence, even his inordinate ambition, are so many arguments with me for employing him wherever there is room for him, if it were only *ne noceat*: but I confess I think he may yet render services to Greece, that may make his Persian voyages be forgotten.

In taking leave of you, Sir, and my subject together, let me intreat of you, whenever you are inclined to canvass these ideas, to recollect not only what I have written, but what I have said to you, with regard to them. I have written with as much freedom as I dare, having no intention to become a martyr to any cause; in conversation there is less danger; and warmth and animation are more natural and becoming; in that respect, what I have suppressed in this Letter, will receive infinite advantage, if it is recollected and repeated by you; and you will possibly gain for me some profelytes, more than you suspect, if you enforce my principles with the grace and elocution which belong almost exclusively to yourself. For the rest, your political conduct and opinions, as long as they are consistent and sincere, let them be *pour ou contre*, can neither encrease nor diminish the esteem and affection, with which I am, my dear Sir,

&c. &c. &c.

London, Jan. 10, 1794.

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